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FRANS HALS

Willem Van Heythuysen.

London

1902

FRANS HALS

by

Gerald S. Davies, M.A.

of Charterhouse

London

George Bell and Sons

1902

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

IN placing this book on Frans Hals before the public the author hopes that the method adopted will commend itself to the sympathetic reader. The task of dealing with the works of one who practically confined himself to portrait compels, if anything like complete analysis of his pictures is attempted, a monotony of treatment which is intolerable alike to readers and author. It has seemed a better method to select from the whole mass of material only such examples as are vital in the artistic progress of the man, or typical of some special quality, or serviceable by reason of their being more accessible to English readers. Many fine examples of the master are therefore passed over in silence, even though they are reproduced as illustrations, because they do not differ in quality and type from those which are dealt with at full length. Similarly, the far distant galleries on the Continent, as, for instance, Vienna and St. Petersburg, are passed over in favour of those nearer at hand in Holland, Belgium or France. The author cannot hope that even thus he has avoided monotony, and he can only throw himself upon the indulgence of the reader.

In the same spirit he has omitted from these pages some well-known anecdotes and fragments of gossip which have done duty from Houbraken downwards, and are available to all who set value on them, while their omission has given room to discuss more interesting points.

The kindness which he has met with from all quarters at home and abroad has made the task full of grateful memories to

the author. His thanks are due, first and foremost, to Dr. G. C. Williamson, for innumerable acts of helpfulness; to Dr. Willem Bode, Dr. Bredius, Mr. E. W. Moes, Mr. H. S. Scholten, Mr. J. B. W. Van Riemsdyk, and others, for assistance generously accorded; to many owners of pictures at home and abroad for information given, and for permission to see their pictures, and to reproduce them for this volume; to his old pupil, Mr. A. E. Tompson, of the British Museum, for help in completing the Bibliography of Frans Hals; and to many others who in this way or in that have rendered him willing aid.

No one can be more conscious than the author of the many shortcomings of this work. No one can be more disappointed than he that he has failed to find new and hoped-for light upon one or two problems of the painter's life, which remain yet for abler hands to exercise their industry upon. Here again he can but crave the sympathy of the reader.

One word yet of personal apology. The author strove for some time to avoid the perpetual immodest appearance of the first person singular. It is said that the compositors who set up the type for Cellini's memoirs find that they are called upon to supply the letter I in wholly disproportionate quantity. Lest the printer should discover the like propensity in this volume, the author at first endeavoured to suppress the assertive capital as far as possible. But the endeavour had soon to be abandoned, and, to say nothing of the clumsiness of the other method, the reader will perhaps agree that it is after all more fair to him, and more just to the subject, that what are merely the author's personal views should not be put forth as if they were matters of general acceptance.

GERALD S. DAVIES.

CHARTERHOUSE,
March, 1902.

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APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGY OF THE CHIEF KNOWN EVENTS OF THE LIFE OF FRANS HALS

1580. Probable date of the birth of Frans Hals at Antwerp.
1600. Apparently at Haarlem (where he remained to the end of his life).
1604. Karel Van Mander left Haarlem.
1611. Frans Hals married Anneke Hermansz.
1613. First known picture—Pieter Schrijver, "Dr. Scriverius" (Warneck Collection, Paris).
1614. Portrait of the minister, Johannes Bogardus (no longer existing).
1616. First great Doelen picture at Haarlem.
1616. Death of his first wife, Anneke Hermansz.
1617. Marries his second wife, Lysbeth Reyniers.
1644. Elected a director of the Guild of S. Lucas at Haarlem.
1652. Distrained upon for debt by Jan Ykess the baker.
1662. Applies to the municipality for relief.
1664. Receives a pension from the municipality.
1664. Paints his last two pictures (Managers of the Almshouses at Haarlem).
1666. (Sept. 7.) Buried in the choir of S. Bavon at Haarlem.

[*An approximate chronology of the chief of his surviving pictures is given on pages* xv, xvi.]

APPROXIMATE CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PICTURES BY FRANS HALS

To avoid confusion the dates are accepted as given or suggested in the Official Catalogues of the respective Galleries.

The pictures which are marked with a dagger † are reproduced in this volume.

Paris (M. Warneck) . .	1613.	DR. PETER SCHRIVERIUS (Pieter Schrijver, poet and historian).
†Haarlem	1616.	ST. JORIS' DOELEN (twelve figures).
†London (Ld. Northbrook)	1616.	PIETER VAN DER MORSCH (*The Herring Seller*).
†America (copy at Berlin)	1616.	THE JOLLY TRIO.
†Cassel	1620.	PORTRAIT OF A NOBLEMAN.
†Cassel	1620.	WIFE OF THE ABOVE.
†London (Duke of Devonshire)	1622.	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER in a hat and ruff (frontispiece of this volume).
Frankfort (Städel Gall.) .	1624.	PORTRAIT OF A YOUTH.
†Amsterdam (Rijks) . .	1624.	FRANS HALS AND LYSBETH REYNIERS.
†London (Wallace Coll.) .	1624.	PORTRAIT OF AN OFFICER (*The Laughing Cavalier*).
†Hague (Mauritshuis) . .	1625.	JACOB PIETERSZ. OLYCAN.
†Hague (Mauritshuis) . .	1625.	ALETTA HANEMANS, wife of the above.
Berlin	1625.	A SINGING BOY (with light blue feather).
Berlin	1625.	A NOBLEMAN (with pointed beard).
Cassel	1625.	TWO SINGING BOYS.
†Haarlem	1627.	ST. JORIS' DOELEN (eleven figures).
†Haarlem	1627.	ST. ADRIAEN'S DOELEN (twelve figures).
†Amsterdam	1627.	A MERRY DRINKER.
Brussels (Arenberg) . .	1627.	TWO SINGING BOYS.
Berlin	1627.	A YOUNG MAN in a violet cloak.
†Berlin	1627.	JOANNES ACRONIUS.
Berlin	1627.	YOUNG MAN in a broad-brimmed hat.
Berlin	1627.	YOUNG WOMAN in a black dress and lace collar.
†Paris (Louvre)	1629.	NICOLAS VAN BERESTEYN.
†Paris (Louvre)	1629.	MADAME VAN BERESTEYN.
†Paris (Louvre)	1630.	VAN BERESTEYN FAMILY GROUP.
France (Gustav de Rothschild)	1630.	THE LUTE PLAYER (*The Fool*).

† Copy at Amsterdam.

†Paris (Louvre)	1630.	LA BOHÉMIENNE.
Berlin	1630.	A JOLLY TOPER.
†Berlin	1630.	NURSE AND CHILD.
†Haarlem	1631.	ALBERT NIEROP(?) or ALBERT VAN DER MEER.
†Haarlem	1631.	CORNELIA VAN DER MEER, wife of the above.
†Haarlem	1633.	ST. ADRIAEN'S DOELEN (fourteen figures, with †Col. Jan Claasz Loo).
†London (National Gall.)	1633.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN in a ruff.
†Rotterdam	1634.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN.
†Brussels	1635.	WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN (small portrait, seated).
Gotha	1635.	YOUNG MAN in broad hat.
Gotha	1635.	YOUNG MAN (wrongly called a portrait of the painter).
†Edinburgh	1635.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN.
†Edinburgh	1635.	PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.
St. Petersburg	1635.	PORTRAIT OF A NAVAL OFFICER.
†London (Buckingham Palace)	1636.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN.
†Amsterdam	1637.	THE SHOOTING COMPANY OF CAPTAIN REAEL (*La Compagnie Maigre*). Finished by Pieter Codde.
Frankfort (Städel) . . .	1638.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN.
Frankfort (Städel) . . .	1638.	WIFE OF THE ABOVE.
†Haarlem	1639.	ST. JORIS' DOELEN (nineteen figures with Colonel Jan Loo).
†Amsterdam	1639.	PORTRAIT OF MARIA VOOGT OR VAN DER MEER.
London (Bridgewater Gal.)	1640.	PORTRAIT OF AN OLD LADY (in the style of Rembrandt).
†Antwerp Gallery . . .	1640.	A FISHER BOY; the landscape painted probably by Ruysdael.
†Haarlem	1641.	THE MANAGERS (REGENTEN) OF ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL (five figures).
†Brussels	1645.	PORTRAIT OF PROFESSOR JAN HORNEBEEK.
†Paris (Louvre)	1650.	A PORTRAIT OF A MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN.
†Berlin	1650.	HILLE BOBBE (Alle Bobbe).
†Paris (Louvre)	1655.	RENÉ DESCARTES.
†Berlin	1656.	TYMAN OOSDORP.
Dresden	1660.	A YOUNG MAN.
St. Petersburg	1660.	A YOUNG MAN (half-length).
St. Petersburg	1660.	A YOUNG MAN.
†Cassel	1660.	A YOUNG MAN in a broad-brimmed hat.
†Haarlem	1664.	MEN GOVERNORS (REGENTEN) OF THE OLD MEN'S ALMSHOUSE (OUDEMANNENHUIS) (six figures).
†Haarlem	1664.	LADY GOVERNORS (REGENTESSEN) OF THE OLD WOMEN'S ALMSHOUSE (OUDEVROUWENHUIS) (five figures).

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*It is this work which describes the Doelen picture of 1616.

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*There is no reference to Frans Hals in this first edition.

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*This is the edition, issued after Karel Van Mander's death, which claims Frans Hals as his pupil. Dr. Willem Bode purchased a copy at the Auction Wiegel, with manuscript supplement, 1679, signed with a monogram, which Dr. Bode considers to have been Mathias Scherts. These notes contain a brief notice of Hals, and are printed in Dr. Bode's "Frans Hals and his School."

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CORRIGENDA

Page 21, line 19. *For* "on a table" *read* "at a table."
Page 72, line 23. *For* "p. 109" *read* "p. 110."

Hanfstangl photo.

I. PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER.

(*Devonshire House.*)

FRANS HALS

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF A NATIONAL ART

THERE is perhaps no task more alluring to a writer on this subject than the attempt to account for the Art of any given country and period by the direct influence of National surroundings. There is at the same time no pursuit which is perhaps more illusory, or more liable to meet with contradictions at every turn. The belief that the great schools of painting, of sculpture, of literature, which the world has seen may be directly traced to causes which lie within the National History, or are at least the direct outcome of certain impulses which favour the growth of these manifestations of Human Mind, is one which is so widely accepted that it will seem almost treason to say that one doubts its complete accuracy, at any rate in the very sweeping sense in which the theory is usually set forth. There is indeed no question that there are two or three of the most striking periods of Art Production in the world's history which occur in such close connection with stirring periods of political life and upheaval that it is almost impossible to escape from the argument of "Post hoc, propter hoc." Yet the scores, nay hundreds, of instances in which periods no less stirring, heroic, dramatic, in many countries, have been followed by no such manifestations of art inspiration, or indeed by any growth of art inspiration at all, stand as a reminder that we are generalizing from very few, though striking cases, and that the instances where no such results have followed are in an enormous majority.

For example—and it is the best example to choose, since it is that from which escape seems least possible—it is to be doubted if any lecturer or writer on Greek Art has ever failed (I cheerfully plead guilty myself) to attribute the great period of Athenian Art in the fifth century B.C. to the stimulus given to national character by the Persian wars, and to the atmosphere of patriotic enthusiasm which followed upon them. There is a certain exhilaration in this vision of a sudden outburst of new and rich life as the immediate consequence, and in some sort the reward, of a heroic struggle. But there are restraining considerations which make even that crowning example more than doubtful. It is indeed quite true that Athenian splendour found its opportunity in the sudden access of wealth which came to Athens as treasurer for all Greece of the money of the great league for the defence of all the states alike. The enthusiastic patriotism may be accepted as an historical fact. It showed itself in a readiness to use other people's money, intended for quite a different purpose, to the glorification of Athens alone. There you have the opportunity no doubt: and you further establish the unfortunate fact, that Art has no inseparable connection with Morals. But when one seeks to prove that Pheidian Art was the direct outcome of some new birth of Hellenic spirit, one is met at the threshold of one's argument by two restraining thoughts. First of all there is the fact, which any close student of Attic Art, who has the eye of the artist to add to the knowledge of the archæologist, will have fully realized—namely that Attic Art was already well on the way towards superb achievement before the Persian host set foot on Marathon; and that if the great struggle for national freedom had never happened there would have been, given the presence of a genius like Pheidias, some great and splendid outcome, though not in just the same shape perhaps, nor with the same opportunity for displaying itself as was, in fact, given to it.

Moreover, the argument takes no count of that same apparition of genius, in this case at a singularly happy moment, when the position of art was ripe for a coming development. Genius is a thing which has a curious way of its own of refusing to agree to any of the rules laid down for its appearance by those who believe in evolutions in art; it refuses to coincide with up-

ward steady progresses which raise the general average of art production: with state-aided movements which spread a dead level of praiseworthy mediocrity, like Nile mud over a wide area. It obstinately refuses to appear when the ground has been carefully prepared for it by the most elaborate system of art schools. It crops up suddenly amongst the briars and the thistles of neglect. At one time it shows itself, solitary though in a great crowd, with a Rembrandt, that Melchisedek amongst artists, without father or mother, without country or age, an absolutely solitary, original, self-centred genius. Sometimes it steps on to the stage when it is already occupied by great players, amongst whom it still towers a head and shoulders taller by virtue of its superior power. So came Michelangelo. Sometimes it rises alone out of a dreary level of mediocrity. So came Velazquez into Spain, whose art was almost as dry and dull and dusty as its own midlands. Sometimes it rejects all that has gone before. Sometimes it seizes all that has gone before and builds upon it a superb superstructure. So wrought Pheidias. You cannot tell whence it comes nor whither it will go. It is as the wind which bloweth whence it listeth. You can lay down no laws either for its appearance, or for its action when it has appeared. Now Pheidias was born, it seems certain, some years before Marathon. The question of whether Greece was to have a genius or not was settled some years before that inspiring event. And be it well remembered that all the battles upon earth cannot create genius in one already born. That matter had got itself settled by the appearance in the world of the small infant, who was presently known as Pheidias. That is always Nature's affair. Circumstances, surroundings, opportunities or their absence, atmosphere, may foster and encourage, may divert or neutralize, may stifle entirely, but can never create genius. Marathon and Salamis did not make Pheidias and his men, but they presently "provided the market," and gave the opportunity.

If we turn to the great Italian period we shall equally find the favourite theory fail us under close examination. The varying circumstances under which art flourished or failed in the various cities of Italy baffle us by repeated contradictions. Freedom, says one, is the true soil on which the arts of Peace, the Liberal arts, alone can flourish. Then we look at Florence

under the dominion of the Medici, and find a Leonardo, a Donatello and a Michelangelo. "An enlightened despotism," says another, and points to this same period of the Medici (we have left the age of Peisistratus too far behind to bring it in again at this point). Then we look at the furious, ungovernable, passionate days of Florence in the early thirteenth century, and find a Dante and a Giotto growing quietly in that unweeded garden. In greater and in less degree the same contradictions repeat themselves all over the Italian continent. Monarchies or Republics, Despotisms or Free States produced, or failed to produce, their crops irrespective of their conditions. Some centres, as Rome itself, curiously failed to contribute largely to the stock. Some, as the kingdom Naples, were wholly barren, save at a few points, the old Greek salt of southern Italy appearing, in some mysterious fashion, to have lost its savour. The facts are unmistakeable; Despot or Doge, King or Pope, the Artist came and went, or refused to come and go, in a manner which leaves little doubt that it is something else than National and Political conditions which favours or disfavours the growth of a great art, and the breeding of a great race of artists. There are an infinite number of subtle factors that are apt to get left out of the consideration, and of which we cannot weigh the force or gauge the chemical activities. First and foremost, in all probability, race and inheritance—Tuscan as against Roman, Venetian as against Sicilian—and then those thousand other lesser influences, climate, physical features, aims and modes of life, lines of thought, facilities or difficulties of material, all combining in mysterious complexity of proportion, and in a manner quite beyond our ken, to promote or to retard. We are, in fact, very little in the secret—and the broader a man's outlook upon the history of the world's art the readier he will be to admit it—of the ingredients which Nature and Circumstance use, and of the proportions in which they mix them to form the blend out of which a great breed of artists is to be produced.

The negative evidence is of great volume. We may be content with one or two instances. What did the Spartan victories of Thermopylæ and Platæa, certainly not less inspiring incidents than the Athenian deeds of Marathon and Salamis, do

for the art and literature of Sparta? At best as much as, perhaps a good deal less than, the Nile, Trafalgar and Waterloo did for the arts of England in the late years of the Georges and the early years of Victoria. Take again one most striking example, very little heeded indeed and almost forgotten already, out of the events of last century. The Greek war of independence, in 1829, in spite of its many barbarities and its many unworthinesses, may rank for its desperate heroism with any effort ever made by any nation for the defence or recovery of its freedom. Here, too, we have two added factors which should have made for a development according to the accepted theories. For Greece, when she had recovered her freedom early last century, after a struggle which should have revived, and indeed did revive, the best memories of her past, had before her eyes, still on her own soil, the visible triumphs of her arts to inspire her. She had more than that,—she had within herself some pure relics, and many mixed ones, of the ancient stock which had produced those very triumphs. And what traces are there of even a first awakening in these seventy years that have followed? There is no nation in Europe, except Turkey itself, in which the unwakened sleep of Art seems so like death.

The bearing of these various examples, positive and negative, upon the questions which lie before us, will be seen when we come to consider the condition of Holland at the moment when Frans Hals appeared as one of its artists.

CHAPTER II

HOLLAND AND ITS ART IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

IN the previous chapter we have spoken of the temptation to assign the phenomenon of any great art period in the world to the stimulus given to the human mind by great national events and influences. The temptation has not been resisted in the case of Holland. The rise and the achievement of that which we speak of as Dutch painting, by which we most of us mean the work of the Dutch masters who can be included within the limits of the seventeenth century, coincide with the last half of the great war of independence against Spain, and with the period immediately following it. That struggle may be considered to have commenced in 1568 and to have ended after eighty-four years. Frans Hals is born, probably, between 1580 and 1584, and is therefore twenty-five to twenty-nine years old at the date of the twelve years' truce in 1609, and the birth-dates[1] of nearly all those masters whom we reckon as representative of the true Dutch School (not embracing, save by chance exception, the Flemish masters) occur in the first half of the seventeenth century, that is to say, at the very time when the war against Spain—no longer a revolt of a subject-nation against its master, but the war of a united republic against a decaying monarchy—was still raging. Their youth, indeed, the inspiration period of life, fell for these men in the heat of a national struggle which no man, though his blood be not Dutch, can read of without that blood flowing faster. It is small wonder, therefore, if writers should be tempted to see cause and effect in rather too direct a connection with that

[1] See an approximate table of dates given at the end of Chapter V.

Hanfstängl photo.]

54. PORTRAIT OF HALS.

(*Earl Spencer.*)

great piece of history. It seems a very ungracious task to disprove so exhilarating a belief. But it is necessary to our true understanding of the course followed by the Dutch School of Painting to show that it developed itself just as if no Spanish war had ever happened; and it supplied a demand, created by the growth of Dutch character and of Dutch life, which was strangely little affected by the Spanish war, except that, as we shall presently see, the religious hatreds engendered by that war had deprived the Dutch School of almost all outlet for its art in the religious subjects and their treatment which had been the inspirations of the earlier painters.

Indeed, the condition of Holland during and directly after that sanguinary struggle of eighty-four years is so wholly unique, so wholly unexpected, so wholly contrary to that which is often assumed by the hasty sympathizer, that it is absolutely necessary for us to look at it historically, if we are to understand the curiously domestic, unheroic, and placid character which the Dutch School presents us with. It is one of those cases where dry statistics presently become instinct with light for us.

When we remember that the Holland which was pitted against Spain was a little country of less than thirteen thousand square miles, and that the greater portion of it was a country only by virtue of the obstinate daily efforts of its inhabitants, being, as a fact, a portion of sea-bottom kept dry by the incessant pumping of its owners. When we remember that the encounter lay between this apparently little people and the power which was reckoned as the most powerful, the most widely-extended, the richest in resources, the best provided with soldiery of any state of Europe; that already, when the truce of 1609 occurred, the war had lasted forty years, and had been carried on under the embittering conditions of race hatred and of religious hatred; that many of the Dutch towns had been subjected to disastrous sieges, their citizens given to the sword, their houses to the sack; that dikes had been cut and sea-walls broken. When we remember all this, it is small wonder if the mind makes for itself a picture of ruin and devastation and all the miseries of war spread far over the face of the devoted little provinces: small wonder that we seem to see lands given back to the sea that had been won from it in the past by patient obstinacy, the meadows

bare of cattle, the fields of cultivators, the villages a desolation, commerce palsied, industry dead, the ploughshare beaten into swords, the quays of the harbours empty of their goods, the little fishing ports silent, the seas sailless and dreary. Surely all this time the voice of the minstrel was low, the mourners went about the streets, and Rachel was weeping for her children. Our imagination and our sympathies conspire to help out the inevitable picture.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is indeed difficult to persuade oneself even with the aid of the severest statistics, and on the evidence of the most unquestionable history, and yet it is beyond controversy, that when, for a short breathing time after 1609, Holland was allowed to lay aside her weapons, she had become, during the forty years of her stress, the most prosperous, the best ordered, and perhaps the most powerful country in Europe. The war had not done this for her, it had only not prevented it. The growth of Dutch commerce, Dutch industry, Dutch production and of Dutch character had gone steadily forward in its already self-appointed course just as if no war of independence had occurred. The Republic in 1609 had three thousand ships at sea or in its ports, and as merchant venture in those days required ships to go armed, it resulted that two thousand of these vessels could be ranked, in the warfare of those days in European waters and in the southern seas, as warships. No other country in the world could show numbers to be compared with this, and the testimony of the writers of other nations is unanimous that the Dutch sailors taken as a whole were the best in the world. She held the supremacy of all the seas, but above all, her power in the southern seas, which gave the key to the East Indian trade, was paramount. She had rivals, but as yet no equal. For the naval power of Spain was already decaying and the great day of England had not yet come. All along her sea-line the little ports were full of fishing vessels. Five hundred busses —a type of fishing craft now extinct, though models may still be seen in the museums of Holland and in the churches—ranging from fifty to two hundred tons, went out annually to the North Sea fishing, with another fifteen hundred pinks and craft of smaller build and burden. And this takes no account of the

"botter" which, from the inland fishing villages of East and West Friesland, harried the flounders of the Zuider Zee.

It is worth noticing that the drainage of the finest polders of North Holland, the Beemster, the Purmer, the Wormer, and many in East Friesland and elsewhere, was undertaken during the Spanish war, before 1625. Some of the finest and most characteristic public buildings in the country date from the same period.

On land the prosperity of the provinces was no less solid. Her meadows were full of cattle, differing indeed in no respect from the same meadows in the present day (except that the almost invariably black and white cattle of the Holstein breed did not then enjoy so complete a monopoly of the pasture. The pictures of Cuyp, Potter, Berghem, show a preference for the red and white, now comparatively rare). Her boers were prosperous, occasionally rich. Their homes presented, so far as we can tell, the same high standard of self-respecting comfort and of good order and cleanliness as at the present moment. Indeed there are few material features of the daily domestic life of the Dutch boer and of the Dutch peasant of the nineteenth century which may not be identified through the pictures of the Dutch School of the seventeenth. The needs of their life were the same; their surroundings the same; above all, their daily struggle against the forces of nature was the same, and on the whole their character was the same—a self-reliant, self-respecting, obstinate people. For where would Holland have been but for its obstinacy? For a full thousand years its daily life had been a daily repetition of the obstinate, persistent, never-relaxed resistance to its great enemies, the sea and the waters. It had come into existence through obstinacy; it had maintained its existence through obstinacy; the Dutchman without his obstinacy would have been unfitted to survive—would not indeed have survived either against Nature or against Man. It was no great violence done to his nature when the Dutch boer was called on to transfer his obstinacy of defence from the ceaseless oppression of the ocean to the more transient oppression of the Spaniard. There were hands enough on a Dutch polder to be able to spare a few pair for the defence of the country, and yet to produce enough off the soil to put a few stivers of saving into the family stocking. For

in the three to four millions which made her population Holland counted probably as few idlers and as few non-producers as any state which has ever yet existed.

And the industries of her towns also were as steady and as prosperous as the labours of her polders and her fields. They were indeed fed from the same enduring, persevering, patient stock. From the year 1590 to the year 1620 the population of Amsterdam rose from seventy-five thousand to three hundred thousand, and though no other town increased in anything like that proportion, there were even then towns, as Haarlem and Leyden, which had suffered most, thriving, populous and well-ordered. It was boasted that there was scarcely a dweller in the Dutch Provinces who could not read and write. The schools in towns and villages were well provided and placed within the reach of almost all the inhabitants. The public institutions (one thinks of Rembrandt, Frans Hals, and Van der Helst, with their groups of the governing bodies, "Regenten" of orphanages, almshouses, hospitals) were equally thriving. None of them appears to have suffered from dislocation or inanition during all those years of warfare. The good, quiet-faced ladies, and the placid burghers who managed (as they still do with like efficiency in Holland of to-day) those excellent machineries, found time to have their portraits taken; and the funds of the establishments could, presumably, stand the strain.

And the important point for our immediate purpose of all this lies in the fact that this prosperity was on the whole fairly evenly distributed throughout the length and breadth of the little provinces. The disproportion between the huge fortunes of the wealthy and the extreme poverty of the poor, which has formed and forms the danger of some societies, did not appear in seventeenth-century Holland. There were, indeed, large fortunes won at sea; large incomes realized in commerce; good competencies earned at farming: but extremes of poverty were scarce. The country was wealthy in the best sense. Its wealth lay in its men themselves. A generally high standard of comfort in the home, with a strong domestic character in the life of the people, was the result, which to a great extent still marks Holland of to-day.

It was not the Spanish war which produced this prosperity

or even commenced it. As we have already said, the phenomenon lies rather in the fact that it in no way checked it. The ripe grain of August is not begun in the autumn months; and the prosperity of Holland which found its culmination in the early seventeenth century was well on its way two full centuries before. It had grown with the Dutch character, it was itself, in a way, the Dutch character, and that assuredly had been shaped and was ready for its use long before the follies of Spain challenged a contest of which the end, incredible as it may have seemed then, could never have been in real doubt when on one side you had these obstinate, enduring Dutchmen fighting for their homes.

Now, so far as Dutch art was concerned, the condition of things which we have described undoubtedly had considerable effect in giving it its particular direction, and in creating the particular form of demand, but by no means in the manner and by the means usually assumed for it. The war did not directly inspire either the Dutchman or his art. He took the matter singularly quietly. He did not and does not effervesce. The Dutch, when their victory was complete, and their freedom assured, erected no Parthenons, built no Walhallas. There is no Arc de Triomphe at Amsterdam, no Trafalgar Square at the Hague. The traveller may go from one end of Holland to the other, and find singularly little to remind him that there had been fought in the country a war of freedom which has no exact parallel in history. The squares of Haarlem and Leyden did not break out into statues. It is hard even to find in those two towns anything approaching to a memorial of the heroic defences which have written their name so deep in the sympathies of all the world. The quiet Dutchmen went on with their merchandise, their farming, their weaving, their orphanages, their almshouses just as before. The attributes which had enabled them to go on quietly with all the best machineries of life during that struggle for liberty enabled them, when victory was won and freedom was assured, to accept them both without pæan and without pride. They were neither upset, nor elated, nor inspired. They were simply established.

And just as you may go from one end of Holland to another and find little in it to remind you of the great struggle,

unless you remind yourself, so may you walk through every museum in Europe where Dutch art is in evidence, and find little or nothing to remind you of it there. It is difficult to think of one picture of real importance in the great seventeenth-century school which can be thought to have been directly inspired by, or which even recalls to our imagination, that great national epoch. One need not even make exception in favour of Philips Wouwerman. It may indeed well be that some of his cavaliers in the lappeted coats and giant boots who shoot off pistols at large in his battle-pieces may be generalizations from the Dutchman and the Spaniard. But they are mere groups disposed for effect, and no more express any national sentiment or awake any more national remembrances than the tin soldiers of a child. One asks in vain for even one picture which has in it the moving power and pathos of such a picture, for instance, as De Neuville's *Les Dernières Cartouches*. Some few puffs of smoke from the cardboard-looking vessels of the early naval painters, these few random shooters of Wouwerman's who may or may not be discharging their firearm on the soil of Holland, and the great war and its stirring memories pass away out of Dutch art. It may be that the swashbuckling cavaliers who ogle the maidens in the pictures of Metsu or Jan Steen may have earned their right to swagger in the days of the great encounter. But if so they are obviously a class of witness who cannot be appealed to.

The truth is that Dutch art was, at all points, the absolute reflection and counterpart of Dutch character. That character was built up of many admirable qualities, but it was wholly practical, limited mainly by the facts of its life. It had endless patience, indomitable courage, and an ingrained love of good and thorough work. But it was not imaginative, it was not spiritual.[1] It was a land where the young men saw no visions, the old men dreamed no dreams. It was a character that did not understand a compromise. The very land itself, the very people who lived on it, were there only by virtue of a struggle of ten centuries against the powers of nature which admitted no compromise even for a single day. And for that same reason it was not a nature which possessed, as a rule, chivalry in the

[1] From all this I must once again explicitly state that I except Rembrandt.

Hanfstängl photo.]

55. PORTRAIT OF ADMIRAL DE RUYTER.

(*Earl Spencer.*)

sense in which we understand that word. For chivalry is essentially a compromise—a compromise between the desire to get all the advantage you can for yourself, and yet not to take all advantage possible without reserve upon your adversary. That was an illogical method which the Dutchman's life had never taught him.

Now out of this solid, unimaginative, unvisionary outlook upon life grew, first the demand for Dutch art, and secondly, the supply. The nation had reached a point of prosperity in which the standard of comfort was throughout high: a great proportion of citizens had already attained to that surplus which sooner or later in all communities, in some shape or other, gets itself applied to the luxuries of life, and of which the pleasure of the eye, that is to say, some form of art, is the most obvious and the most universal. The peasant and the fisherman had already satisfied this desire by carving and painting for himself his mangleboard, his plate-rack, his cradle, and his sledge. The merchant and the trader must now satisfy his craving by covering a space upon his wall with a portrait of himself and of his vrouw—perhaps even of the nurse and the baby. They must be of a good size and very like. This was, indeed, no new taste to the Dutch. But there was generally a spare wall space on which a few smaller pictures might appear. They, too, must be very like; and they must be something which the honest burgher and his wife and his friends could understand—nothing left to the imagination, nothing which demanded second-sight or spiritual intuition. It must be something which he and the vrouw had seen or could see any day of the week—else how could they tell if it was like? None of your visions, none of your classics, none of your heroics, but a plain piece out of a daily Dutch life. And it must be done so that you can see the thing: none of your suggestions, none of your impressionisms. You must be able to count each button, to trace each fold, to number each brick just as you can in real life. And there must be no smudges of paint: you must not be able to see where the brush has been, since that can only be bungler's work, unfinished sort of stuff; and as there are no brush sweeps in nature, it cannot, says he, be really like if you can see too much of these.

And this being the form which the demand took, the supply

was at hand. The Dutch painter could exactly meet these requirements. Patient with an endless patience, painstaking to the point of dullness at times, he was almost always a splendidly equipped craftsman. Imagination not being required of him, save in a very secondary shape, but realism and close craftsmanship being absolutely insisted on, the Dutch painter was in the happy position of having a market with whose supply he was in full sympathy. Dutch home life could supply Dutch home needs.

The portraits of mynheer and mynvrouw, the housewife in the parlour, the maid in the kitchen, the cows in the meadow, and, it must be added, the boer at his cups, and the drunkard in his pothouse—for the Dutchman has never been too hasty in taking offence at a little coarseness—these things satisfied Dutch aspirations, provided, as before, that they were well done.

Classical subjects were at a discount; they had never taken real root on the soil of the polders, and perhaps it was better so. The spiritual vision of the early Flemish painters had stayed behind upon the other side of that great gulf which Spanish oppression and Spanish bigotry had fixed for ever. It was small wonder if, in casting out the one, the Dutch had cast out also the other. To say true, they did not feel its loss.

The purpose of this chapter has been to try to set Frans Hals in his atmosphere. In so doing it will be seen that we have seemed to forestall developments of Dutch art which had not of course occurred when he appeared upon the scene. For the Dutch School of "genre" art developed after Frans Hals, not before him, to some extent even as a consequence of him, not he as a consequence of it. But one cannot realize the condition of the Dutch mind through its full development as shown in that school, and therefore it has been all-important, even at the risk of seeming to put the cart before the horse, to set forth the limitations to which the art of Frans Hals was liable, as of a typical Dutchman of his day amongst typical Dutchmen.

CHAPTER III

FRANS HALS THE MAN

SO far we have busied ourselves in trying to create an atmosphere. It is high time, thinks the reader, that we came to be told about the man himself—an easy task enough, to all appearance, since he lived and moved a bare three hundred years ago, a prominent figure even in his own day; a man whose art was always deeply interesting to artists; a man, moreover, who lived surrounded by men who made it their business to know all about art and artists, and who wrote freely about them. The reader has a full right to hope that with such material in prospect he will be presented with a very vivid personality; or, at least, that he will be given a very complete array of facts about the real Frans Hals. The writer himself once shared that hope. But there is nothing more exasperating than to find that the chroniclers of such a man have satisfied themselves with scraps of gossip, a few anecdotes, and a very little disagreeable fact, and have meanwhile left the Man and the Artist unpainted for us. We ask for bread and we get stones. We ask for something of the life of this strong man amongst painters, and we get a few records from the police court and a few entries from the workhouse register—a few facts, none too respectable, which we could have well spared, but absolutely nothing about that part of the life which, after all, must have been its worthy side. There are facts in Frans Hals' art development, as we shall presently see, which are quite inexplicable; a very few lines from one of those who lived beside him would have given us the explanation. There are great gaps in his career which cannot be filled up for us now, but which any one of his contemporaries might have filled in for us with half-a-dozen lines of genuine biography. We could afford

to give away all the unseemlinesses which have been recorded or imagined for us about this extraordinary man, if we might have been taken for one hour inside his studio to see him at his work, or allowed to sit by him for one hour, if only at his pot-house, to hear his thoughts about his art, his ideals (for he had them), his preferences among the men who had gone before him or who lived beside him. Of all this we get nothing, and even the hard, dry facts of the man's life, such as the dull biographer is apt to delight in, are on this occasion omitted or stated so inaccurately that correction for them has to be dug out of obscure and casual references, or built up out of inferences. Hals, it must at once be freely owned, bears an ill character at the hands of most of his biographers as a roysterer and a free liver. It is only just to say that most of his biographers have merely repeated and passed on scraps of gossip which are of no more value because they are now three hundred years old than they were, or than any mere gossip is, on the day when it was uttered. No special pleading indeed can make Hals into a model character; no casuistry can remove certain facts presently to be stated about his morals. But before the reader has laid down this book I hope that we shall be agreed that there must have been a side to that life which has not been touched by the chroniclers of his shortcomings. They have insured, as the chroniclers of such lives are apt to do, that the evil which he did shall live after him; the good which was in him was interred with his bones when the worn-out old man was laid to his rest in the choir of St. Bavon.

The Hals family had long been identified with Haarlem. For a full two centuries we are told that the name occurs in the archives of the city. The ancestors of Frans Hals had served in many offices of trust and dignity. The painter's father, Pieter Claesz Hals, who had married Lysbeth Coper, was one of the municipal magistrates of the town, and in 1572 one Frans Claesz Hals, probably our painter's uncle, was a member of the Town Council (Vroedschap) of Haarlem. We are without means of knowing what exact profession Pieter Claesz Hals, the painter's father, followed. He must have lived in the city through the seven months of the winter's siege in 1572-3, and have been a witness of the scenes of heroism and brutality

which place the defence of Haarlem on a level with those of Jerusalem, Saragossa, and Saguntum. He must have known Kenau Hasselaer[1] and her three hundred brave women defenders; Anthony Oliver the painter, De la Marck, and many others whose names are immortal out of their own country, but without any memorial to-day within it. But it is hardly probable that he took any prominent part in the defence, since all who did so perished in the butchery which followed on the surrender to the Spaniards. It has, indeed, been suggested that the reason why Frans Hals' father left his town in 1579, as we know that he did, was that he had had sympathies with the Spanish party, amongst whom were, just before the siege began, not a few of the magistracy; and that the unpopularity which this begot against him led him to withdraw. This is, however, a mere guess, and not a very probable guess; some six years elapsed before Hals migrated from Haarlem to Antwerp. It was at Antwerp, almost beyond doubt, that Frans Hals the painter was born, and not at Mechlin, as the earlier chroniclers record. In all official documents, creditable and discreditable, Frans Hals is described as "of Antwerp," and this even when he had returned to Haarlem and had been established there as a citizen for a full fifty years. It is, in short, the old Dutch custom of always describing a man by the place of his birth, and as such the title "Frans Hals of Antwerp" carries the point that his birthplace was the Flemish town.

The date of his birth is far more uncertain, though far more important. It might be settled, one would suppose, by systematic search in the parish registers at Antwerp, which, so far as I know, has not been undertaken. The earlier chroniclers, following one another, but without giving any reason, all accept his birth-date as 1584,[2] and until within the last few years that date appeared on his pictures in all the leading galleries of Europe, and may still be seen in several of them. In his monograph on the Dutch painters Dr. Bode gave that date as practically accepted. But in most collections, as well as in

[1] Probably the Nicolaes Hasselaar whom Hals painted (Amsterdam Gallery, 445) was a descendant of Kenau Hasselaer.

[2] The date still remains, or remained quite lately, on the pictures of the Louvre.

recent notices of the painter, the date of the painter's birth has been altered to 1580 or 1581—an important change, and not without bearing upon the earlier pictures of the painter. It was natural to suppose that such a change must be the result of the discovery of new documentary evidence, or possibly of the register of birth itself. But I owe it at last to the kindness of Mr. E. W. Moes that I am able to give the evidence on which the change has been made. It is due to the fact that Vincent Laurenszoon Van der Vinne (the elder), who was for a time in the studio of Frans Hals, and was settled as a painter in Haarlem at the date of the old painter's death, states that Hals was in August, 1666, eighty-five or eighty-six years old, and reckoning backwards this gives 1580 or 1581 as the date of birth. But the very vagueness of the statement "eighty-five or eighty-six" shows that Van der Vinne had no accurate knowledge of Frans Hals' age, and it would not be safe to accept any date as final until some trustworthy register or record be found. Our knowledge concerning the early years of the painter is a complete blank. He may be said with some certainty to have gone to Haarlem, and with his parents apparently, before the year 1600, since his younger brother, the painter Dirk Hals, is reputed to have been born in Haarlem before that year. In any case it must have been before the year 1604, because in that year Karel Van Mander (the elder), who is claimed as having been Frans Hals' teacher, left Haarlem finally, to die two years later at Amsterdam on September 2nd, 1606. We shall have, indeed, in a later chapter, to examine the value of the term "teacher," but there is no reason whatever to doubt, as some have done, the assertion that Frans Hals worked in the studio at Haarlem which Karel Van Mander and Cornelis Cornelissen kept in the Spaarnestad from 1583 onwards. It is, perhaps, safe to say that the painter's father returned to his native town somewhere before 1600, but how long before is a mere matter of conjecture.

Purely conjectural also is the manner of his life and training from 1600 till the year 1611, when an entry in the parish register at Haarlem records the baptism of a son, Herman. The name of Frans Hals' wife is given as Anneke Hermans or Hermanszoon, and this unhappy lady's name occurs again in

two entries, the first in the police records for February 20th, 1616, when Hals was summoned for maltreating her, was severely reprimanded, and dismissed under the undertaking that he would eschew drunken company ("dronken schappij") and reform. The poor woman died within a very short time, apparently a few weeks only later, but not, it would seem, as the result of Frans Hals' misconduct. The miserable end of this unhappy marriage can hardly have affected the painter very deeply, for just one year later, on February 12th, 1617, his marriage is recorded with Lysbeth Reyniers, and nine days later the register has the entry of the birth of their daughter Sara. His second wife became the mother of many children, and after fifty years of married life she outlived her husband. They lived, it may be observed, in 1617,[1] in the Peeuselaarsteeg.

The facts are disagreeable, and, recorded as they are in the unimaginative pages of the parish register and the police court, they admit of no explaining away. It is not an edifying record. The facts are painful and unsavoury. But upon them, and around them, has grown up a mass of worthless gossip unbacked by any record, and a good deal of it the snowball growth of later successive enlargements. We are asked on this evidence to believe that Hals was not only a man of imperfect morals, but that he was an habitual and continuous drunkard and sot from about that time (1616) to the end. That his life was entirely Bohemian, the absolute reverse of simple living and high thinking, is quite beyond question. But that he was a mere sot is an assumption which has been built upon the foundation of facts which I have already set down, and perhaps also a little upon the fact that he often chose for his models—they were easy for him to come by, and cheap, I take it, and Hals was nearly always impecunious—the less edifying members of society, the mountebank, the gipsy, the strolling player, the pothouse loafer. Let me, by the way, at this juncture, draw attention to one point which should in fairness to Hals be stated. Whatever his models were, his subjects and his manner of dealing with them compare very favourably indeed with those of most of the Dutchmen of his day, and of the day which came directly after. One only needs to think of some of

[1] See A. de Willigen, "Les Artistes de Harlem," 1870, p. 140.

the passages which one has seen in the works of Jan Steen (I cannot subscribe to the verdict which would claim him as a moralist), of Ostade, of Teniers. I can recall no instance of the like passages in any work by Frans Hals. And it will be remembered that he lived well into the period when the Dutch taste had been fully educated through the artists aforesaid and others to such gross passages, and when presumably, if we may call the law of supply and demand in evidence, they were looked upon with no disfavour. That Frans Hals in the days of his distress and need, and fully equipped both by his knowledge of that class of society and by his own consummate power of realization, made no excursions into that field, says, and this is the time for saying it, something in his favour. But to return to the question of his sottishness. I hold no brief for the morals of Frans Hals—would not indeed accept one if it were offered; but there is a great difference between admitting the ugly passages in the painter's life on convincing evidence and admitting, on nothing that can be called evidence at all, that he was an habitual sot of many years' standing. That is not wholly a moral question; it is also a physical question. I hold it to be impossible from a physical point of view that the charge can be true. Let anyone who is in doubt stand before the series of company pictures in the Town Hall at Haarlem, ranging from 1616 to 1645 (for the present purpose I omit the later groups of the series), and ask whether it was physically possible that those works, whose feature above all else is swift, decided, unerring certainty of eye and hand, and that in an ever-growing degree of strength and assurance, could have been accomplished by a man whose youth, for he was thirty-six when the first of the series was painted, had already been wrecked by dissipation, and whose hand after thirty years more of it still trembled not as it accomplished feats of dexterity and firmness, to put it no higher at present, which have few if any parallels in art. And for further assurance let him fill in the gaps in that series with such portraits as *The Laughing Cavalier* of the Wallace Gallery; the Berensteyn portraits of the Louvre; the Olycan pair at the Hague; and, above all, the Van der Meer old lady at Amsterdam, and many another. If these were the works of a chronic sot, they would make

a dangerous argument for a temperance advocate to have to tackle.

I hold that this is a safer ground to take in rebutting the exaggerations which have grown up concerning the character of Frans Hals than that which may be found in the pages of some of his recent defenders. They urge that Hals cannot have been a man of ill life, because there is evidence that he stood in good repute at Haarlem amongst his fellow-citizens, the evidence being briefly this: that in 1617 and 1618 he, with his brother Dirk, was elected an honorary member of the Guild of Rhetoric.[1] Readers who know the exact value of the term "Guild of Rhetoric" amongst the Dutch institutions of the day may perhaps feel inclined to smile. The term had no such severe and sedate import as we might suppose. Its meaning shaded away downwards from a very learned body, through the social and artistic club, to the mere reciter and showman at a country fair. In the Brussels Museum is a portrait of some members of one of these guilds, presumably gathered in one of the rooms of their club. One man sits in a free and easy attitude on a table reciting something to his two or three listeners, one of whom accompanies him on the mandoline. There you have probably the free and easy artistic club. The lowest stage is represented by a picture in the Louvre called *The Rhetoricians*, where the scene is the booth of a country fair. The "Guild of Rhetoric" at Haarlem, a city which did not fall below other Dutch towns in its power of conviviality, was probably a fairly festive literary and artistic circle; and even in our own day and country there are a good many such clubs where a preliminary examination in morals is not a *sine quâ non* for membership. The date, too, of Frans Hals' election, 1617, is a little damaging. It proves too much. It fell, observe, within the twelvemonth of the painter's worst offending. It shows, in short, only that public opinion in Dutch society of that day, at any rate in the "Guild of Rhetoric" of Haarlem, was none too straitlaced. The election was due, we may fairly suppose, to his great 1616 picture; the scandal of that year was none of their affair.

A member of the civic guard, moreover, of Haarlem! We

[1] His exact title was "Beminnaer van de Rederijkerskammer de Wyngaertranke."

doubt not that the town of Haarlem got with him a sturdy pair of shoulders, if hard knocks had been needed again with the Spaniards in his day; but we are not further convinced. Neither do we find in the statement, for which Bode stands godfather, that Frans and Dirk were both members of the Town Council, all the conviction which we seek. I presume that the statement has been made on sound evidence, though I have my qualms; but membership of Town Councils was not in Holland of that day, I take it, any more than in our own country to-day, inevitably accompanied by strict morality. I accept these facts, indeed, as evidence that, after the year 1616 at any rate, and probably before, he was a person of some mark in his town, and that neither his fellow-citizens nor his fellow-artists looked with too serious an eye on his shortcomings.

In the year 1644, when, at the age of sixty-four, he was doing strong and striking work, he was one of the directors of the Guild of St. Lucas, which protected the interests of all the arts and crafts in Haarlem, a position to which his fame as an artist more than entitled him. But that is the last note of honour and happiness in the painter's life. Once more it is from the police courts and the workhouse (Oudemanhuis) reports that our story is to be completed. This time, however, the entries are pathetic rather than disgraceful.

For many years of his later life, though we have no accurate information of the date at which this began or when it ended, Frans Hals had helped out his living by conducting a life school in his studio. In the Town Hall Collection at Haarlem is a picture by his pupil, Job Berckheijde (1630-1693), of the studio in full swing. Frans Hals, his back turned to the spectator, is to the right of the picture, turning to speak to a visitor, said to be Philips Wouwerman, who has just entered. On a table or throne stands a nude male model, round whom sit the artists, working from the life. Tradition gives names to these: Dirk Hals (the painter's brother), young Frans Hals, Herman Hals, Jan Hals, K. Hals, J. Hals, Van Deelen, P. Molyn, G. Berckheijde. So is it recorded on a scrap of paper pasted behind the canvas, which, however, is not regarded as final evidence. But the value of the picture lies entirely in its visible record of the fact that Hals was at this time earning, or trying to earn, a livelihood

as a teacher. And the names of those who worked in his studio, Brouwer, Ostade, and others, make one suppose that the enterprise must have had its day of success. But that day evidently passed and left the old man without any further resource towards the end of his life. Commissions were few and far between after about the year 1650. Already so far back as 1641 we are told that he refused the payment of his annual subscription to the Guild of St. Lucas, but impecuniosity need not then have been the cause. In 1656,[1] however, we have evidence that poor Hals was on his last legs. His teaching connection had apparently deserted him, or at least was not enough to keep the wolf from the door. In that year his baker—he is not the first nor the last of artists who have had strained relations with their bakers—Jan Ykess sues him for 200 Carolus gulder, and obtains a distress warrant on the painter's goods. We do not hear anything of the butcher or of the other tradesmen, for the very obvious reason that Jan Ykess had astutely blocked the way by already possessing himself of all there was to claim. And that that was his aim is evident from the fact that the baker dealt not unkindly with the bankrupt painter, allowing him to live in the house and retain the use of his goods. Ten years later, in 1662, Hals in his distress applies to the municipal council for aid and receives a gift of 150 florins down, and two years later still (1664) is once more before them with a like request. They voted the old man a yearly pension of 200 Carolus gulder, and for the immediate present a gift of three loads of peat. It tells so much, that gift of peat, so much of the empty home and the fireless hearth. There was no fuel in the house to keep warmth in the old bones through the chills of a Dutch winter. And Hals was eighty-four years old, and the wife but little less. Two years more above ground for the old man yet, and for her some twelve more—she outlived him, and received fourteen sous a week of poor relief. On September 1st, 1666, according to the parish register,[2] Frans Hals was buried, or at least the grave was opened, in the choir of St. Bavon, the great church—one always

[1] The date is variously stated in various authors, but I copy from the original process in Dutch, given at full length by E. W. Moes in his preface to "Frans Hals," Haarlem, 1896. "Actum den IX December, 1656."

[2] Given as Sept. 1st by A. Van der Willigen; as Sept. 2nd by E. W. Moes.

thinks of it as a cathedral—of Haarlem. The fee paid, four florins, is duly recorded, and has led some of his biographers to introduce a touch of pity, which for once is perhaps unneeded. The four florins does not represent the expenses of a pauper's funeral, but is evidently the mere sexton's fee for opening the grave. To me, as I have stood above the great painter's resting-place and looked down the simple and noble aisles of the great church, it has always seemed that they laid him to rest where it was most honour for him to lie. The choir of a cathedral is no pauper's grave. "A miserable tomb," says Bode. But there are no monuments in the choir of St. Bavon. All alike, wealthy burghers, brave soldiers, penniless artists, lie there beneath the flat and mostly nameless stones, the choir being kept quite free of obstruction. He shared his sleeping-place, at any rate, with some of Holland's great ones. And I have, for my own part, no doubt that honour was intended to him in laying him there.

I have tried to identify the actual spot of Frans Hals' grave, which has hitherto been said to be unrecognized. It is declared, by the Koster of the church, to be recorded in the parish books as the slab which is numbered 56[1] in the choir. That slab lies on the right-hand side, as one looks towards the altar, about halfway down. Left to myself, and without that information, I should have felt a strong inclination to believe that a flat stone on the left, which bears on it the initials F H, was the real resting-place of the painter. But be it here or be it there, some few yards one way or the other, it is in that choir that poor Frans Hals sleeps; and, as one passes out of the church into the great square outside, one feels the fitness of the resting-place. It is scarcely more than a long stone's throw across the "Groote Markt," little changed in general appearance, in spite of certain modernizings, since the days when Hals himself walked in it—to the old Town Hall where are gathered the

[1] I have since found in Van der Willigen, "Les Artistes de Harlem," 1870, p. 149, the quotation from the original entry in the parish register of deaths which gives 56 as the number of the tomb. The slab which bears that number is not that which originally covered the grave, but has evidently been taken from another grave, as it bears the name C. Gyblant, with a coat of arms upside down of a later period—a slovenly and irreverent fashion of dealing with the dead which is hardly creditable.

masterpieces that, if all his other works had perished, would still have made him famous. One goes from the workman's grave to the workman's work; from the weakness, the failure, the mistakes of the life of Frans Hals the man, to the strength, the success, the achievement of the life of Frans Hals the artist.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARTIST LIFE OF FRANS HALS

IT has seemed more convenient to outline all the facts of the life of Frans Hals in the previous chapter with such dates and brief statistics, all too meagre, as we possess, reserving the facts of his artistic life for the present chapter. The landmarks of the life so dealt with were few enough, and vague enough, and far apart enough in all conscience, but they are as a series of convincing guide-posts, compared with the strange gaps and silences and uncertainties which have been left to us in the art career of one of Holland's greatest painters. There was a time when, with this book in contemplation, and just before revisiting many of the foreign galleries to refresh my memories and write more exact notes, I had high hopes that lights would dawn upon me out of the pictures themselves, which would convince me on some at least of the problems which arise, as I shall presently try to show, out of this strange career. That there should be any mystery at all about the career of a man of such eminence, living in such an age, and whose antecedents and early training were surely worth knowing about to those who lived with him and pretended to write of him, seemed perhaps the greatest mystery of all. I cannot pretend that my expectation has been realized, nor can I presume to hope that anything I shall be likely to write will suggest any way through the darkness. But I may at least express surprise that, so far as I know, no writer has yet brought out with any importance the curious problem which at once presents itself in the early life of the artist.

It may be put thus. Here is a man, born, as we have seen, probably between 1580 and 1584; therefore thirty-two to thirty-six years old (the latter more probably) when his first known picture of importance, and that a picture of the first importance,

namely, *The Banquet of the St. Joris Shooting Company* (1616), is painted. There exists but one known picture by him before that time, namely, the *Portrait of Petrus Scriverius* (1613), in the possession of M. Warneck in Paris. He is known also to have painted before 1614 the portrait of the minister, Johannes Bogardus, who died in that year. The picture is lost, but in 1616 Jan Van de Velde made an engraving of it. Beyond these two pictures nothing genuine from the hand of Frans Hals exists, or is even recorded before the year 1616, when he appears as a fully-equipped painter in a work which is not only a recognized masterpiece amongst the paintings of the world, but is even chosen by some judges and by some artists—I state the opinion without endorsing it—as the painter's chief achievement. The reader will at once perceive the questions that arise to one's mind out of these facts. How comes it that Hals appears before us with an acknowledged masterpiece which is led up to by practically no predecessors from his hand? Observe, the difficulty does not lie in the fact that Hals at the age of thirty-two to thirty-six produces a masterpiece. There are plenty of instances in the careers of great artists where masterpieces have been produced at an earlier age; instances, as of Raphael and Giorgione, where even the career itself was near upon its close at such an age. There is no difficulty at all in understanding that a man of the undoubted power of Hals should have painted a great picture at such an age. It is not even remarkable. The wonder and the difficulty lie in the almost total absence of all preliminary examples of the master's art. Go and stand in the Town Hall before No. 85, the 1616 group of twelve figures, the Doelen [1] (shooting) company of St. Joris, which faces you directly as you enter the room and is the first of the great series. It is, although it lacks certain qualities, and those perhaps the highest qualities which the later groups possess, for all that a work of consummate achievement.

It is not merely, as so often happens in a young artist's early triumph, a work of the highest and most hopeful promise, which, read in the light of later achievements, forecasts the future greatness, and helps us to see how the later greatness grew out of the earlier promise. Frans Hals did indeed, as we

[1] For remarks on the Doelen or shooting guilds of Holland, see next chapter.

shall presently see, go forward to greater strengths. He saw by-and-by with different eyes, and he worked to a different end. Fully granted. But in this first great Doelen picture of 1616 there is nothing young, nothing tentative, nothing immature. He is not feeling his way, he is not still on his way. He has arrived and long arrived. He is complete master of all his craft; nothing gives him any difficulty; his power of achievement is on a perfect level with his power of seeing, though both are to go further presently. The painting of every detail is masterly, the work of a man who has left all his prentice days long behind, who has learnt all his lessons and run the gauntlet of all his young failures. There is no sense of the effort which makes so much for sympathy in the work of young painters when the power has not yet grown up to the level of the inspiration. Inspiration in this work of Hals there is indeed none. It is quiet, complete, self-possessed achievement, the handiwork of a man who has successfully laid to rest, one after the other, the difficulties of his student days. There is evidence of labour, the concentration of the painter's whole powers on every point—rather too much so, perhaps—but none of difficulty or experiment. No artist, nor any who knows the history and the life-efforts of all artists before and since, will, in standing before that picture, for one moment cavil at the conclusion which I set forth, that the St. Joris Doelen picture (Chap. VII.) of 1616 was not only not an early picture in the career of the great painter, but that it came pretty far on in his series; that it had been preceded by many and many another canvas from the same hand; entire failures leading on to partial failures; partial success leading on to complete success, as has happened in the life-history of every man who ever yet set brushes to canvas. That will, I am without any doubt, be the verdict which we must give as we stand before that picture on the mere evidence of the work itself.

There is another consideration which will bring us to the same conclusion. The fact that Hals was employed at all to paint this Doelen group, while there were in Haarlem still to be had plenty of the men who made a speciality of this kind of thing, and who could give you any number of heads on any number of shoulders, is in itself a proof that in 1616 Hals had

already served his apprenticeship and earned a reputation in his native town. The good Dutch burgher of Haarlem did not then, nor does he now, throw away his gulden. The committee of the St. George's Guild needed to know—we may take our stand upon it—that they were going to get a good likeness per head for their money; and when they chose Frans Hals that year they had, amongst them, seen a good deal of evidence that they would get from him what they paid for. What was that evidence then? A solitary portrait of grave Peter Scriverius, or perhaps also the portrait of respectable Johannes Bogardus?—Credentials too few, and perhaps also too dull, to qualify the painter for the task of painting the goodly and substantial festivity of the Schutters Maaltijd—the dinner of the Archers (archers no longer in that age of gunpowder) of the Company of St. George. They were not, we may take it, very profound judges of a work of art, those solid, downright, somewhat swaggering burghers of Haarlem. They probably had but one standard of selection, likeness and reality. And they needed to know that they had got hold, in Frans Hals, of a man who could do them all, them and all their braveries, their ruffs and their sashes, their velvets and their satins, their bows and their buttons, their pikes and their flags, their cups and their platters, their fowls and their hams and their pasties, all of it as like as it could stare. Where was the evidence on which, when they gave their commission to Frans Hals, they were going to get their money's worth? That such evidence existed, and in plenty, we may feel absolutely sure. What has become of it all? Where are all the canvases on which Frans Hals worked, and through which he grew to the mastery, and earned the fame which prepared him for the great test of 1616?

I confess with humiliation that I have no answer which will satisfy my readers, having none that will satisfy myself. It remains to me an unexplained mystery. There is, with the exceptions which I have already given—M. Warneck's portrait of Scriverius and the vanished portrait of John Bogardt—no trace of them, nor can I see any hypothesis which satisfactorily accounts for their disappearance. The considerations which I have already set down seem to me quite to dispose of the idea that Hals was not of sufficient fame for his early works to have been

worth preserving. He became famous, locally famous at any rate, about 1616, and that fame, by the universal law in such matters, conferred a value on his earlier works which, if my suggestions are reasonable, must have existed in fair plenty in Haarlem.

If we make the extraordinary assumption that his previous works had been so far inferior as to be not worth preserving—and when was such a phenomenal departure and breach of continuity ever seen in the career of any other man—we are reminded that Frans Hals was above all a portrait-painter. The work which gained him fame enough in Haarlem to win him the St. George's commission was, questionless, previous portraiture from his hand. Now family portraiture gets preserved for considerations quite apart from its artistic excellence, and had Frans Hals' early portraits been ever so bad, and ever so unlike his subsequent work, many of them, one imagines, would still have hung on the walls of Dutch homes. If artistic value, if commercial value had been wanting to them, their domestic value would, one would suppose, have saved a fair proportion of them long enough until the reviving value of Frans Hals brought them, in our own century, out of their obscurity.

The disregard under which the painter's name suffered for a full century, say roughly, though not accurately, all the eighteenth century, cannot be called in to explain the disappearance of all these works, because, although during that period, incredible as it may seem, the works of Hals were held of no account and fetched but little money at sale, yet, this having been true for all his works alike, painted at any period of his career, one still has the difficulty that quite a considerable number of his portraits from 1616 onwards remain to us. And these, too, should have disappeared as well as the work done before 1616, if there were anything in the explanation.

Strange to say, even the dealer has not stepped in to fill the gap. I am not aware of any supply of any pictures to the saleroom or the shop-front labelled as "an early Frans Hals." Nor, as one walks through the galleries of Northern Europe, and marks the dreary presentments of dull Dutchmen and Dutchwomen by Dutchmen quite as dull, is one often tempted to halt

Hanfstängl photo.]

4. THE MERRY TRIO, 1616.

(*Copy. Berlin Museum.*)

and wonder if there may not lurk here an early work of our painter which has been given to another. The temptation more often lies in the other direction on the whole—to remove the name of Frans Hals from some of the pictures that have been labelled with it, and to give the picture back to its rightful author if only we can know him.

In fact, as I began the enquiry so must I end. Where are the prentice pictures, the beginner's works, the careful, hopeful immaturities, the canvases touched with the signs of dawning strength, such as have marked the growing careers of all other great ones, and assuredly must have marked also the career of this great one, Frans Hals of Haarlem? There is only one answer to be given: "Who knows?"

A well-known and very trenchant writer upon art, Mr. Joseph Pennell, has recently declared, in his remarks on Senefelder, the discoverer of lithography, that you give away all the interest of a man's life so soon as you can set it all down in perfect clearness. You rob him of all his title to be interesting so soon as you rob him of all his title to be mysterious. If this be true, the present writer may claim some consolation for the fact that he has quite failed to redeem the first thirty-six years of Frans Hals' life from their uncertainty and vagueness. It must be admitted that the early years of the great painter are still left in a highly interesting condition of mystery.

CHAPTER V

THE BOYHOOD AT ANTWERP

IT has seemed to be the method which should in the long run make most for clearness, that I should in the preceding chapter frankly state the case with regard to the difficulties in the early artistic career of Hals, before attempting to fill in the great blank with conjecture. The reader will thereby have understood that it is conjecture, founded on some probabilities and on a few asserted but unverified facts, by which alone we can hope to suggest the influences under which the man, who was destined to become one of the greatest of Holland's painters, may have first opened his eyes upon art. It will save me, therefore, from loading my sentences with preliminary "ifs," and from much cumbrous re-stating of alternatives, if I am allowed to assume that Hals was born, as stated, in Antwerp between 1580 and 1584, that he migrated to Haarlem, the ancient home of his family, about the year 1600, and that he was before the year 1604 working for a longer or shorter period in the atelier kept by Karel Van Mander in that town.

The question we have to ask ourselves is, under what influences would a boy, whose natural trend was towards art, be likely to have come in Antwerp of that day? Who were the artists of the past whose work he would have been likely to see and to be inspired by? Who were the teachers, the working artists, the fellow-students of his present with whom he may have been brought in contact? Whether Frans Hals seriously adopted the profession of a painter early or late, it is absolutely certain, and we need waste no time in discussing such a point, that he must have been from the first keenly attracted towards art and artists; and the spell must have been cast over him in his boyish days at Antwerp. Let

us try to put ourselves back into the position of a boy, with keen art sympathies, living in Antwerp, roughly speaking, from 1580 to 1600.

As one walks about the galleries where the masters of the North are most richly represented in Germany, Holland, Flanders, France, and England, and as one tries to eliminate all those who by date or other circumstance are disqualified, one finds oneself left face to face with strangely few men who in that time and place could have had much share in inspiring a young and brilliant mind like that of Rubens or of Hals. It is a little like the task which one sets oneself when, after a few days of feasting on Velazquez in the Prado at Madrid, one becomes conscientious and turns to the serious duty of examining the question of who, among the gloomy respectables that went before him, may have set fire upon his young enthusiasm. And in this task on behalf of the Northern painter, I have found myself arrested from time to time, as I dare say others have, before the work of one painter, and of one only, amongst those in Antwerp, who is likely to have been seen and known of the boy Frans Hals. This is the painter Antonis Mor, Antonio Moro, Sir Antony More, according to whether you meet him in Flanders, Italy and Spain, or England—a Dutchman by birth, a Fleming by adoption. This man stood a head above the other portrait-painters of his day and country, Jan de Mabuse only excepted. He has quality, style, individuality and directness of aim. And these are things which for ever impress, no matter to what school, or date, or manner of thought they belong. At first sight no two men could lie farther apart than Mor and Hals. To those who have learnt to think of Hals merely as a slashing executant, recklessly splendid in his technique, but sinning against his own genius for want of purpose, the coupling of the name of Hals with that of Mor in one sentence will seem a wilful paradox. But to those who, following Hals picture by picture, have learnt, in spite of their own preconceptions, to see in him a man to whom the one inspiration of his life and of his art was to reach absolute truth as he saw it, absolute likeness as it came in at his own eyes and went out at his own hands—to these my suggestion will present no paradox at all.

There is in the work of Mor a transparent sincerity of purpose and a convincing truthfulness which arrest and hold one in front of his work. Before a portrait by Mor one is at least persuaded that one is looking at the man, or the woman, as Mor saw them. That, surely enough, was not the way in which Hals would have seen them by-and-by when he became himself. But those who consort much with artists, to say nothing of their other fellow-men, know well how common it is to find a man who is himself sincere in his art, full of admiration for the work of some other artist, dead or alive, whose work at first chance sight seems to be an absolute contradiction of all the qualities of his own. He has probably seen and felt in it, often unconsciously, some principle with which he is in sympathy, though the principle reveals itself in his own work in some quite different fashion. The goal is the same, the roads that lead to it may be wholly unlike. He who inspires another does not stamp on him his own individuality; he does not present him with a facsimile copy of his own soul. He calls out of that other, and awakes to life, the individuality which is to be his and to make him himself. When the recipient of it has gone far upon his road he may, and, if his personality be a strong one, he mostly does, so lose all trace of his original inspiration, that it is hard even for himself to remember, and far more so for others to guess, whence he got it. We all of us who have reached middle life must know that the ideals of an early youth are not the ideals of our fuller age. Was the inspiration we received from them less real therefore? Do we owe them less gratitude on that account?

And I can find no one amongst those whose work young Hals may have seen in Antwerp so capable of impressing as Mor. When that opinion first came to me in the galleries of France and Belgium, I was unconscious that the very same suggestion had been already made by a great critic in the parallel case of Velazquez. In his great monograph on the Spanish painter, the late R. A. M. Stevenson points out how the great series of portraits by Mor at Madrid may have affected Velazquez; and for much the same reasons as I have endeavoured to set forth above. I have come upon the passage since, and naturally my first instinct has been to suppress what

I have just written, since it could not but seem to be an idea annexed from Mr. Stevenson. But on further thought it has seemed to me that I should not be doing my duty to my subject if I suppressed it through any such fear. The opinion was formed independently, and I think it best to leave it to stand or fall upon its merits.

There is yet another painter before some of whose work I have found myself now and then standing with the thought in my head, "Here is a painter from whom a young nature might take fire." It is the painter Michel Jans Mierevelt, one who has hardly received quite the place that he deserves if we judge him by his best. It must be granted that he more often fell behind his best than reached it. But when at his best he was far before most of his contemporaries, and at his worst was rarely quite so dull as they. And there are two or three portraits by him in existence—for example, the William II. of Orange at Windsor, and the portrait of the lady in the Wallace Collection—which insist on being looked at in any company. They show him to have been not only an excellent and accomplished craftsman, but also one who had that sense of beauty which was too often denied to a Dutchman. Whether young Hals could have seen any works by Michel Mierevelt while he was still living in Antwerp, I do not feel at all sure. But a little later, when he had gone to Haarlem, it is not only probable, but practically certain that he would have done so. For Mierevelt, a native of Delft, was settled in that town, and was enjoying a large practice—I hope the word may be forgiven, but it unluckily expresses the condition of a Dutch portrait-painter as no other word will do—in groups and portraits among his fellow-townsmen. He may claim that he so far survived the dulling influence of that class of practice, that he did from time to time rise above his own level, and gave us things which we would not willingly be without. His age, some thirteen years at least above that of Hals, makes it possible for him to have been an influence upon the latter at the time of the return of the family to Haarlem.

But it is not from the work of older men alone that a student derives his inspirations and finds his stimulus. Men often have found an even greater spur and encouragement in the

fine work of a fellow-student or contemporary. And one cannot forget that the later years of Frans Hals' sojourn at Antwerp fell in the years of Rubens in the same town. There is indeed a story now discarded, but once told and repeated with a gay disregard for dates and possibilities, that Frans Hals was the pupil of Rubens. The great Fleming was some three years only—seven years on the more liberal scale—older than Hals, and when in 1600 he left Antwerp for his nine wander-years in Italy, Rubens, a man of twenty-three, was still in his successful student stage, and by no means so long or so fully established as a master as to be taking pupils a few years younger than himself. But the circles of the two young men may have intersected. In the community of young artists in Antwerp they may have been thrown together, and almost certainly would have been, enough at least to know each other's work. That there should have been any close intimacy is, of course, most improbable. The two men, and doubtless also the two boys, were cast in wholly different moulds. But it is by no means impossible that they may have met and worked under the roof of the same teacher; though it is far more probable that they may have received teaching from the same master at different times.

Who were the teachers in Antwerp at this time from whom Hals may possibly have received the first initiation into his art? We know the names of the three men under whom Peter Paul Rubens worked. Of the first of these, Tobie Verhaeght, we practically know so little that we need merely pause at his name. Neither is it at all probable that Otto Venius, the courtly, travelled, Italianized master with whom Rubens worked in the last few years of his studentship, had any share at all in the shaping of Frans Hals. But at the name of the third, Adam Van Noort, under whom Rubens worked for several years from about 1599, we find ourselves arrested.

Adam Van Noort had a better reputation as a teacher than as a man, though it is here again only fair to say that the brush of mere gossip has spread the darker colours far beyond their original edge. But there is an agreement in the main fact that he was a man of rough, strong, coarse-grained nature, a man of the people who, priding himself on that fact, seems, as is apt to

happen, to have cultivated the less estimable traits of the people. He is described as having revolted Rubens by his coarseness and rudeness, until the latter sought, under Otto Venius, a more congenial atmosphere. But there is also an agreement that no better or more capable teacher than Adam Van Noort was to be found. At any rate Rubens put up with him for four years, though there is no particular reason to doubt that he did, in the end, leave him for the reason assigned. But it is easy to understand that what would have revolted the delicately nurtured, fastidious young Flemish page, just free from the courtly decencies of a great house, might have had little effect on the rougher nature of the Dutch boy. It is perfectly possible that Hals may have received his first training at the hands of Van Noort, and it is, I am afraid, pretty certain that he would not have been greatly revolted by the more than Dutch outspokenness, on all subjects, of his master. It is perhaps hard on Van Noort to set down the suggestion which crosses one's mind that the unpleasant features in Hals' own career are not incompatible with an early training in a studio where the standard of convention and of respectability was not set high.

But there are features in Adam Van Noort's position as an artist and a teacher which tell far more forcibly in favour of the suggestion that he is the most likely man of those who taught in Antwerp to have given its first direction to the art of Frans Hals. Van Noort was indeed a great influence in the art of the day. Besides the four years spent by Rubens in his studio—years which probably gave to him, and kept for him afterwards, just so much as remained native Flemish in his art, after it had been sunburnt in the air of Italy—besides that great pupil, a reputation in himself, we find that Van Noort had under him at different times the painters Jordaens (who married his daughter), Sebastian Vranckz, and Van Balen. Through the latter he became the grandfather in art of Van Dyck and of Snyders. Adam Van Noort's standpoint as an artist was as downright and determined, as bluff and as direct, as national and uncompromising, as his speech and manners and tastes were said to be. He was a sturdy opponent of the Italianizing tide which was threatening to soften away out of Flemish art all that was

distinctively individual in it. He had never been one of those who had joined the colony in Rome, and who had come back neither Flemish nor Italian. He had stuck to Antwerp all his days—perhaps to his pipes and his pots there. He had sought his models in his native town, we are told, and painted the men of his choice after the sight of his eyes. Fromentin, in that most suggestive book, "Les Maîtres d'autrefois," speaks[1] of a work which he had seen by Adam Van Noort; he gives no clue to its identity, and I can only therefore quote the opinion as it stands. But he speaks of it as a very characteristic picture, and he describes qualities in it which are very suggestive when we think of them in possible connection with Frans Hals. He speaks of Van Noort as a painter who loved forcible accents, showy colours, strong high lights on somewhat powerful tones. He had a sort of fashion of striking the canvas and placing on it rather a tone than a form. He spared no high light where it could be obtained, on forehead, temples, enamel of the eyes, edges of the eyelids. And, above all, Fromentin mentions his manner of rendering the glistening moisture of the flesh, as if on a hot day, by using much red contrasted with brilliant white, so that he gave to all his personages the look of a certain vigorous activity, and, so to say, "an air of being in a perspiration." Now this last singular criticism becomes very remarkable when we remember that this very trait is seen in several of Frans Hals' portraits, notably in that of the man in the National Gallery, who is obviously painted at a moment after exertion, the red streak on the forehead still showing where the hat has been.

Now one is at once struck by the points of resemblance between the recorded traits of the teacher Van Noort and the known traits of his possible pupil Frans Hals. The art of the men, and the whole characteristics of that art, seem to run strikingly on the same lines. There is in Hals the same wholly individual aim in art, the same championing of a national style and subject, the same scorn—at times almost brutal scorn—of all foreign-born refinements and softenings. And if Hals worked in any studio at all in Antwerp, and surely he must have, then I suggest that there is no name which carries with it so much likelihood as that of Adam Van Noort.

[1] Fromentin, "Les Maîtres d'autrefois," p. 36, ed. 1882.

There is a point which tells against this theory, and which must be stated. In the records of the Guild of St. Luke at Antwerp there is a list of over thirty painters who were pupils of Van Noort from 1587 to 1627. The name of Frans Hals does not appear amongst them. But then neither do the names of Rubens, of Van Balen, nor of Vranckz appear, all of whom are known from other sources to have worked under him. The absence, therefore, of the name of Frans Hals is not fatal to the theory, which, being incapable of proof, must still be judged only by its probability or improbability. The absence of the very important names given above may perhaps be explained by the suggestion which I venture to put forward, that the list in the records of St. Luke's gives only the names of those who were either assigned to a teacher by the guild itself, or under its sanction. It is quite possible, and indeed probable—for thirty-two pupils in forty years would be a starvation list for a teacher—that there were many others who attended the studio and used the models quite independently of the guild.

And again, in considering this very interesting point as to whether Rubens and Hals may possibly both have received instruction from Van Noort, though not necessarily or even probably at the same time, I do not think we need attach too much weight to the fact that the style and technique of the two men at their full development are not alike. Their roads parted early. Rubens left Antwerp in 1600. Hals had perhaps left it already. We do not practically see Hals till the year of his first great picture in 1616. Sixteen years in the lives of young artists lead them often very far apart; the farther perhaps in proportion as their individuality is strong, and the farther, beyond doubt, as their mould is different. Those sixteen years had been very differently spent by these two men. Rubens had wandered wide in Italy and Spain, with a mind highly cultivated and receptive, and very much open—one at times is forced to think a little too much open—to the impressions and influences which his opportunities offered to him in such abundance. Hals followed the one furrow of Dutch art—his own Dutch art, for he may fairly claim it as his. I much doubt if ever he saw a portrait by Titian or by Velazquez in all his life.

If we take a portrait painted by Rubens before 1620, and

another painted by Hals at about the same period—they must be portraits in both cases, or there is no standard of comparison—though there is little fear of mistaking one for another, and though each man is himself, yet there is certainly no such violent and irreconcilable contrast as to make it impossible that twenty years before they should have received the mere A B C of their technique at the same hands. More than this one need not claim.

A few important birth-dates:

Michel Jans Mierevelt	1567	Bartholomeus Van der Helst	1613
Jan Van Ravesteyn	1572 or 1580	Gerard Dou	1613
(Peter Paul Rubens	1577)	Jan Havicks Steen	1625
Frans Hals	1580?	Gabriel Metsu	1630
Adriaen Brouwer	1605?	Nicolaas Maes	1632
Rembrandt	1607	Jan Ver Meer	1632
Gerard Ter Borch	1608	Pieter de Hoogh	1632
Adriaen Van Ostade	1610	Frans Van Mieris	1635

CHAPTER VI

AT HAARLEM

IN Chapter III. we have seen reason to believe that the Hals family migrated from Antwerp to their family city, Haarlem, not later than 1600. The landmarks in the life of Hals are very few; but we seem to have one in the statement put forth in the second edition of the Lives of the Painters, "Het Schilderboek," by Karel Van Mander, issued in 1618. It is there claimed that Hals was one of Karel Van Mander's pupils. There is no reason to set the statement aside, as has been done. It is true that it does not appear in the first edition of the book, published in the author's lifetime (he died in 1606). But the reason is obvious, Hals at that period not being sufficiently famous to be worth claiming as a pupil. Twelve or fourteen years after the author's death, when Hals had painted at least one great picture and many good ones, the editors of the second edition naturally claim him for Karel Van Mander, and this claim is made during the life of Hals—he lived indeed for nearly fifty years longer—when it could have been denied by him at any moment if it had been untrue. The book was widely distributed amongst artists and those who were interested in art, and probably had nowhere a better sale than in Haarlem itself, where Van Mander had lived so long and had so large an acquaintance. It is obvious that such a statement, if it were false, would not have been deliberately inserted for readers who were perfectly able to contradict it. We may accept it, indeed, as one of the few absolutely verified facts in the early life of Hals, that he worked in the academy, atelier, life-school, call it what you will, which Karel Van Mander held at Haarlem.

Karel Van Mander, sometimes wrongly written Vermander,

was of noble family, and was born at Meulebecke in Flanders in 1548. He may be described rather as a writer who painted than as a painter who wrote. "He early discovered," says one biographer, "a lively genius for poetry and the belles lettres, and a decided disposition for painting"; and when we presently learn that he translated the Iliad and Odyssey, a great part of Virgil, and the Metamorphoses of Ovid, besides committing a great deal of poetry on his own account, and also writing the history of Dutch and Flemish painting from 1366 to 1604, we begin to estimate the value of the expression, "a decided disposition for painting."

Karel Van Mander was a man of education. He had wandered many years in many countries, in Flanders, at Vienna, and at Rome, at which last place he had spent several years in copying ancient works of art. He represents, indeed, the Italianized Fleming of that day, and is the very reverse of Van Noort in all essential respects. He helped, it is said, his friend Spranger, who was engaged in some of the palaces of Rome at the time. But it is impossible on any showing to elevate Karel Van Mander above the level of a very third-rate artist. "His pictures, which are rare, are poor enough," says the notice which has already borne witness to his "decided disposition for painting." I am told by Dr. Bredius that there is a signed Van Mander in the possession of his Excellency Pierre de Lemenow at St. Petersburg; another at Kiew in the Collection Chanienko; and in the Town Hall at Haarlem, in the great vestibule, hangs one undoubted piece from his hand.[1] It is a long carved board, described as an escutcheon, bearing an inscription in honour of the voyage of the explorer Linschoten to Nova Zembla. It bears the date 1596, with the painter's monogram. It was probably used on the occasion of some public reception or other ceremony. It is somewhat depressing as a work of art; but then, to be just to it, it evidently affords no criterion of Van Mander's powers as a painter, but must be judged rather by the

[1] Heer B. W. F. Van Riemsdyk informs me that in his opinion and that of Dr. W. Bode a picture in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, No. 1561, which is described in the catalogue as "The Avidity of the Clergy: An Allegorical Picture," may be attributed to Van Mander. It lacks most of the qualities which make a good picture.

standard of signboard art. Even from that point of view it does not impress. At each end a woman's figure, nude to the waist, rises out of painted scrolls. These figures are quite unimportant, and merely perhaps enable one to see, knowing it already, that Van Mander had played with Italian sixteenth-century painting. He is said by writers, who would seem to have had opportunities of judging of his style which are hardly open to us, to have rejoiced in ruddy, ill-harmonized flesh tones coupled with weak drawing, and his pictures have at no time commanded any enthusiasm. It is, indeed, tolerably evident that a man who translates Iliads, Odysseys, Georgics, and Metamorphoses, besides a good deal else, within a not very long lifetime (he died at fifty-eight), is not likely to have sat very close at his easel, nor to have gone through too searching a course of study. The word dilettante is indeed written large upon the artistic side of his life.

In the year 1578 Van Mander, after his travels, had settled in Haarlem, and presently, finding, as we may suppose, that translating the classics into Dutch was no high-road to fortune, we are told that he started an "Academy" for painting in conjunction with Cornelis Cornelisz, or Cornelissen (1562-1637). It is said that these two men were joined later in their enterprise by Hendrik Goltzius the engraver (1558-1617), who did not himself take to painting till he was in his forty-first year, viz., 1599. And I am inclined to think that his share in the management of the "Academy" did not commence in earnest until the disappearance of Van Mander from it in 1604.

Now all these three men were thoroughly imbued with the Italianizing spirit of which we have already spoken—Cornelissen, perhaps, the least of the three. The "Academy" was probably a "life academy, life school, or public atelier," something like those which exist in Paris at this moment, and it is highly probable that Van Mander did little more than, probably not nearly so much as, the average visiting *maître* of these latter establishments. Hals no doubt worked in the school, which was probably the only one of its kind in Haarlem, for the convenience of models, room, and artistic companionship. Karel Van Mander was, as we know, at the time within which Hals' pupilage must have fallen, deeply engaged in his

"Schilderboek," and indeed he retired for one whole year to Zevenbergen, where the book was finished. It is easy to guess that the "teaching" which Frans Hals was likely to have received from Van Mander was not of a very penetrating character. Indeed, I should be inclined to think that, of the two chief owners of the life school, Cornelis Cornelissen was the more likely man to have been seen frequently among the pupils. He was a respectable though very dull painter, who translated no Odysseys but stuck to his easel. His translations, indeed, were confined to translating Italian gods and goddesses out of their natural atmosphere into indifferent Dutch paint. Specimens of these exotics will be found at Haarlem in the same room as the great series of Frans Hals. He suffered from the same semi-classical Italian infection as Van Mander, and thereby spoiled in himself a tolerable Dutchman. But he was a sturdier and more absolute artist, and satisfied the plain Dutch desire for direct likeness and fully-clothed humanity sufficiently well to be chosen for at least one of the large company groups, which he executed with respectable propriety. As he wrote no books he was not in a position, as were Van Mander and his executors, to put forth any claim to Frans Hals as his pupil. But if any virtue at all went forth from the heads of that "Academy" to the strong young Dutchman, and I believe it at best to have been exceedingly little, then it is to Cornelissen rather than Van Mander that Frans Hals is most likely to have owed it.

But evidently at the time when, according to our acceptance of the dates, Hals would have worked under that roof, he was already a young man of twenty. His direction in art was, we may feel sure, already taken; his choice was already made, and his face set firmly towards an end in art which was absolutely unlike that which any one of these three teachers professedly would have set before him. And indeed it is quite evident that they did not practically influence him in the least. There is no trace in any work of Frans Hals, early or late—at least, in any that has survived to us—of any influence from the Italianizing men of Flanders or of Holland. He never, so far as we have any evidence, even attempted any of those classical subjects so dear to the hearts of that school. He never handled, in

any picture that remains to us, his subject in such a way as to carry our mind away from his own country. The belief which so many men of the day held, and which wrecked their individuality, that no subject was quite satisfactory unless it savoured of Italy, never had the least effect on this sturdy nature. He was practically impenetrable to it.

But whatever may have been the impression made upon the young Hals by his two "teachers," Cornelissen and Van Mander, it is quite certain that at that time he made little or no impression upon them. It remained for the execution of Van Mander to discover his value in a second edition. If, as I venture to suggest, he was at that time already strong enough to stand by himself, already firmly set in the direction which had possibly been given to him by some earlier teacher of anti-Italian tendencies, and capable of impressing the boy with his own strong nature, then the explanation is not far to seek. The young man's work aiming directly at the truth as he saw it, and refusing all the prettifyings and idealizings, the classicalities which Van Mander dealt in, would have naturally failed to commend itself to that master, who was probably incapable of appreciating the value of its direct strength and trenchant realism, when he passed, at intervals, the young man's easel in the art academy of Haarlem. That Hals worked there, and worked to no small profit, I see no reason to doubt. There he could obtain the training and the discipline to be derived from the use of the nude model, and from that alone, for which, by the way, Cornelissen, though not Van Mander, was quite a competent guide; and the merely technical methods taught there were undoubtedly sound. It is thus and thus only that I would interpret the statement that Frans Hals was the pupil of Van Mander.

And this seems to be the convenient point at which to sum up briefly the theory which I venture to put forward as most consistent with the visible evidence of Frans Hals' work, until further evidence, if such there ever be, shall set it aside. It runs thus: that Frans Hals during his Antwerp days worked in the studio of some Flemish master of the old national type, probably Van Noort; that he arrived at Haarlem already a capable student, and that he there worked in the public atelier

of Karel Van Mander and Cornelis Cornelissen, but that he remained faithful to the principles which had been implanted in him by his earlier teaching, and which, fostered by his own individuality, and steadily adhered to in the face of other influences, produced the Frans Hals who was to found the true Dutch school of painting.

CHAPTER VII

THE DOELEN PICTURES

FROM 1604 to 1613 the life of Frans Hals is a complete blank both as regards biographical notices of him and the evidence to be extracted from his own pictures. Neither source of evidence exists. Indeed it is not till 1616 that he comes before us in a really tangible shape with his first great company picture, *The Feast of the Shooting Company of St. Joris* (St. George). This gap, once more, can only be filled by the imagination, and by suggestion limited by probability.

It needs but to see the 1616 group (p. 50) to be assured that in art, at least, the man's youth had been in no wise wasted. Here is the work of a man who is already an accomplished master of his craft. I have already in an earlier chapter pointed out the impossibility of supposing that this masterly performance had not been preceded by many works whose whereabouts we are now ignorant of. I need not recapitulate the argument. A study of the first St. Joris group, 1616 (for there is a second St. Joris group in the room, date 1627, and a third, 1639), in itself makes further argument unnecessary. The painter of this picture already had all the technical resources of his craft at his fingers' ends, lacking only certain modes of seeing, certain revelations of atmosphere and harmony, and of the play of light on colour, which are not given even to the great ones during the years of youth with its stress and striving, its concentrated, breathless straining to its goal, but come only later in life, when the complete outlook upon art is quieter and more self-possessed. These were to be added, as they mostly are, later. Meanwhile, for the present, we have a man who at the age of thirty-two to thirty-six is, at all points, master of his craft.

How the years had been spent we can perhaps conjecture.

The mark of the man is on him already—Truth, absolute truth, to what he sees so far as he can get it, nothing imagined and nothing added or read into it. Likeness, in all things—that is to be the aim, from end to end of his life, of one of the greatest portrait-painters who ever lived; but it is to be likeness modified, or rather directed, by the special choice which marks the idiosyncrasy of the master. It is to be likeness, above all things, of the human face, but under the play of expression. His deliberately chosen aim in art is to represent the external play of features, as they express the varying emotions, but mainly the more ordinary ones of laughter, amusement, surprise, conceit, swagger; not, certainly, the most dignified, nor altogether the most worthy, but rather the most visible, and therefore, after all, those which a painter, whose office it is to paint what he sees with all the truth he can, may claim as a legitimate field, and in a certain sense the safest, since there is the less danger of his reading into them—as several great portrait-painters have done—the emotions of their own character. And it was an empty field, also, till Frans Hals filled it—empty still to this day, moreover, so far as any rivalry to Frans Hals is concerned. He holds it still without a second.

One may imagine, but one cannot define, by what concentrated, incessant observation, maintained for all his student years, Frans Hals made himself master of the power to set down these passing, though often superficial, expressions of the human face. The concentration, indeed, was such that, as this memoir will try to show, it absorbed almost all other aims, and left Frans Hals too much the master, yet the supreme master, of one form of achievement. But ask any artist who has himself passed through the mill and achieved excellence, to tell you as you stand before the first great Doelen group, how many hours, weeks, months, years of work, how many scores of careful studies, how many previous pictures, went to make up the power in Frans Hals that should produce even that one group alone.

And this absolute truth in realizing the passing expression of the moment, but of a specially chosen moment, which Hals was apt to prefer, was supported by an equally vivid power of realizing the appearance of inanimate objects which have in one sense no expression to change, but in another sense change their

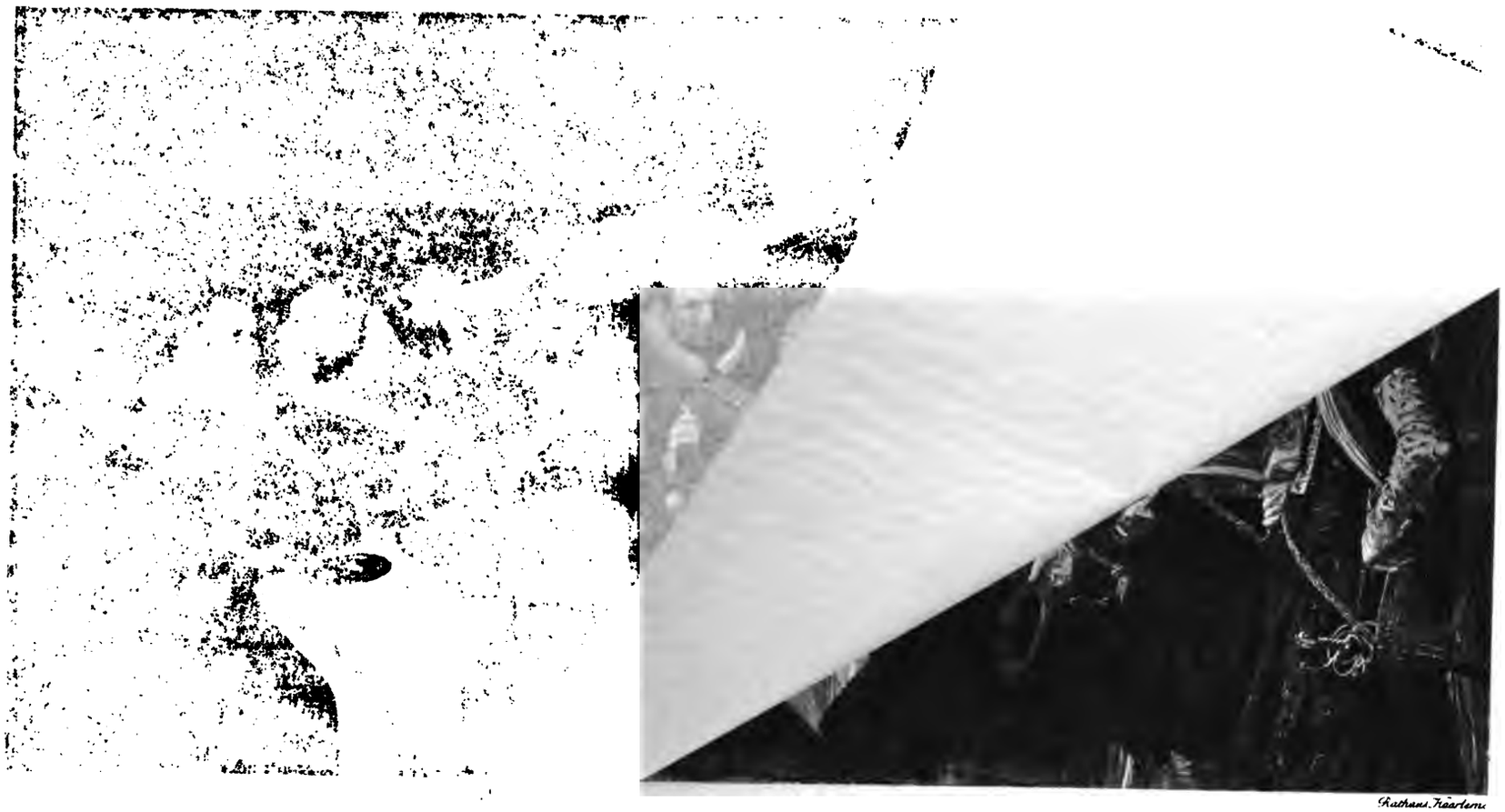
expressions every moment under every change of light and every change of position either in themselves or in other objects. The truth with which Hals' painting on a large scale represents all the accessories of his picture has, in its mastery of the rendering of the visible facts, no equal even in the more minute and apparently laborious technique of the later Dutchmen. He can paint you full size the pots and the vessels of the "Schutters Maaltijd" with as complete illusion as a Teniers or an Ostade. These accessories become secondary, not because they are realized with less importance, but because they are sent back to a secondary interest through the far superior interest of the living men. So, too, in the details of his sitter's dress. He gives you with his superbly certain sweep of the brush a satin or a silk, a button or a chain, which Metsu or Van Mieris cannot give you so well with their microscopic exactness. How many studies of still life had he produced before he painted the trappings of that magnificent young swaggerer on the right of the first St. George's group (p. 55)?

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST DOELEN GROUP (ST. JOR'

THE first of Hals' great pictures, the *Doele* Company, group of 1616, is the picture first, after mounting the staircase in t' Haarlem. In the same room there are, in all shooting company pictures, besides three sma large groups, containing five persons in each, of "re controllers of the hospitals or almshouses for old folk. pictures range from 1616 to 1661, and show the man to us at intervals, often too long intervals, indeed, of his career. There is perhaps no room or set of rooms in any museum in Europe, with the one exception of the great Velazquez Collection in the Prado at Madrid, which can claim to show with equal completeness the artistic periods of any great painter. And the Haarlem Museum has this advantage, that it has little or nothing else which can seriously interrupt the interest in that great series. There are but few other pictures in any of the rooms which rise very high above the level of general dullness. It is Frans Hals and Frans Hals only, for nine people out of ten, and for once at least the majority is in the right of it, in the Town Hall of Haarlem.

It is necessary before examining these works in detail to say a word or two as to the origin and scope of these shooting guilds or companies—"Doelen," as the Dutch word has it. Remembering of course that they originated at a time when there were no standing armies, and also at a time when the trade guilds were still in their full force, we shall easily understand that they stood to military service in the same relation as the trade guild stood to the trade which it protected and regulated, and as the art guilds—St. Luke's at Haarlem, for example—to



Rathaus. Haarlem

...set of St. Joris Shooting Guild. 1616.

Hanfstangl photo — Rathaus Haarlem

Banquet of St. Joris Shooting Guild. 1616.

the various arts whose interests they watched over. These shooting clubs—originally archers' clubs—arquebusiers' clubs in the days of Hals—composed of course entirely of volunteers, formed an invaluable nucleus and rallying-point for national defence in any great emergency. They had proved their value during the last forty years against the Spaniards in Holland. They provided at such a time a ready-made organization, which could at once be enlarged to include all those who were ready to serve as volunteers for their country. The defence of Haarlem itself (1572-3) is, needless to say, the everlasting memorial of their use and of their value.

In times of peace these guilds, or volunteer companies, naturally took on them a more social complexion. They held annual shooting competitions both amongst their members and with other companies and other towns, securing thereby a certain standard of national efficiency with the arquebus. They had an occasional march out, or other form of visible parade. Above all they dined, as do all self-respecting societies in all countries, frequently and with thoroughness. From time to time, moreover, and this is chiefly to our purpose, the officers of the guild decided to have their portraits painted in large groups, which were presented to the guild and hung on the walls of their meeting hall. These pictures were paid for, apparently, in most cases, not out of the funds of the guild, but by a private subscription among the officers, arranged on a sliding scale which doubtless varied with circumstances, but which roughly may be supposed to have corresponded with the degrees of rank. An examination of the many groups which still exist in Holland bears out this view. The colonels and the captains occupy the most conspicuous positions, and are nearly always presented full face to the spectator, in the forefront of the picture. The rest, always in view, for he who paid his money might claim that, had to be content with slightly less conspicuous positions, three-quarter face perhaps (actual side-face was rare, and probably little tolerated by the sitter), but still conspicuous enough that all the world should know him. The one tit-bit of colour which does seem to have been actually reserved to the artist for his special artistic use was the ensign of each particular corps. This office

was usually held by some young member of a rich family. He was, we may judge from the evidence of our eyes, apt to indulge his fancy in the way of dress, and he was generally the "water-fly" of the party. And since, as a man of wealth, he had probably paid a share of the expense out of proportion to his rank, he could, if required, be placed in a very conspicuous position without offence to the higher ranks. He was, in fact, one of the more moveable pieces on the chess-board, and could be used by the artist as an artistic resource. Mercifully for art, the guilds did not wear a set uniform, each officer going as he pleased, although it must be admitted that this was not an unmixed advantage to the painter, who found himself compelled to paint costumes, in which the owners happened to fancy themselves, in a juxtaposition which was almost fatal to harmony.

In fact, the painting of these Doelen groups in a manner which should satisfy the personal vanity of fourteen or fifteen persons at a time, and should also satisfy the requirements of a really good picture, was a matter which was beset with complications. The older painters, as well as most of the later, followed a simple tradition which relieved them to some extent of the personal difficulty. They set the figures more or less all in a row, and as far as possible full face, or now and then in two long rows. There is a painful and visible attempt in these to get variety out of monotony by placing the bodies sideways beneath the full-faced heads, which have only too obviously in many cases been painted first on to the long canvases, and are, pretty evidently, faithful though dull likenesses. That the Doelen groups should follow this kind of general plan was a fixed tradition of Dutch art, and it was a tradition, moreover, from which the portrait-painter could hardly hope to escape, and as a matter of fact never did escape. These military burgher-critics were, perhaps, no very profound judges of art, but they were profoundly sensitive as to whether they had got what they contracted for. If Colonel Claasz Loo had got himself painted in a less full front and absolutely recognizable fashion than Captain Hendrik Potts in the same group, he, Colonel Claasz Loo, would know the reason why, and the next time there was a commission going, he, the said colonel, would vote for Peter Grebber, who always made you very like. The colonel has no patience, it may

be, with any of the talk about composition, and atmosphere, and other such artist's vapourings; he wants to be painted so that he looks as if he would bounce out of the picture at you. All the other fourteen persons (Mierevelt in one of his Doelen pictures at Delft has painted thirty-six!) demand, according to their rank, the same kind of capacity to bounce; and, all of them in their best clothes, too—none of your alterations or suppressions. "Do you suppose that I, Johan Claasz Loo, who have paid for my place, front row, number four from the left, bought my fine new orange sash that you should turn it into a red one, because it throws out something in Johan Schatter's doublet, who comes next me, who has only paid for number five, back row?"

The attempts, therefore, to break entirely with tradition in the handling of these military groups were few and far between, and brought little advantage to those who made them. The effort, which has of course become historical, and was most disastrous to its author, is Rembrandt's so-called "Night Watch." When, in 1641, Rembrandt received the commission to paint the march out of Captain Frans Banning Cocq's company of the Civic Guard, he proceeded at once to put an end to all his own future commissions in that line. He paints a picture, granted, that men are to talk about for several hundreds of years, but who wants that? and who paid for that? We subscribed on the understanding that we should have our portraits painted clean and clear for all the world to know, and who is to know any of us in that thing? We can see the captain, to be sure, there in the front, though it's none too like, even for him, but as for the rest of us——?

And so Rembrandt painted no more civic guards to his death, though he was so far forgiven as to be commissioned in 1661 to paint the group of the five staalmeesters. The moral of the story is that the painters were wise, with a worldly if not with an artistic wisdom, whose instinct had led them to keep within the old tradition, sanctified as it were in a sort, moreover, by a kind of understood contract.

For after all, in a commercial point of view, the good burghers had a grievance against Rembrandt. They had paid for portraits, and they got a harmony in gold and silver and

brown. They did not put down their gulden to enable an artist to gratify his luxurious sense of light and shade, of mysterious shadow and splendid sunshine. The sergeant there on the left, loading his arquebus—did ever any man see such a nose? say the injured burghers. Flame red—and merely because the artist wanted a piece of that colour in that particular spot to send down some of the other reds of the picture. But it is obvious that a man doesn't pay his money that artistic liberties may be taken with an organ which he naturally prizes. Rembrandt had perhaps solved the pictorial problem; it cannot honestly be said that he had fulfilled the implied contract.

Frans Hals made no such excursions as Rembrandt into these dangerous fields. He accepted, on the whole, the traditions of the task, extremely arduous as they were, and, keeping within those very cramping limitations, he did his best to produce a great set of portraits and a great picture. When we remember what the difficulties were which he had to face, the success is beyond dispute. The defects are generally those which are absolutely inseparable from the conditions which were imposed upon him, and they could not have been escaped except by a deliberate breaking with those conditions. There was another painter who was at the very same moment, in the neighbouring town of the Hague, facing exactly the same problems with equal honesty—Jan Van Ravesteyn, a man perhaps some seven years older than Frans Hals. He painted his first great group at the Town Hall of the Hague in the year in which Hals painted his first Doelen picture of St. George (1616), and many of his later groups in the same place cover much the same period as the series by Hals at Haarlem. Ravesteyn escapes from his task with more credit than most who faced it, being indeed a very excellent painter. It is stated, in Bryan's "Dictionary of Painters," that Ravesteyn was a pupil of Hals, "whose early style he closely imitated." A glance at the facts are enough to dispose of the astonishing statement. Ravesteyn was born about 1572; Hals about 1580. In the year 1616, before which date it is tolerably certain that, at any rate, Hals would not have been taking pupils, Ravesteyn was already an established painter at the Hague. He had, indeed, settled at his native city in 1598 (when Hals was barely eighteen), and never left it afterwards.

Detail of St. Joris' Shooting Guild, 1616.

Furthermore, it has been already seen that we have absolutely no evidence as to what the "early style" of Hals was, unless the 1616 group be considered his early style; and by that time Ravesteyn was already well settled in his style, which, though not very individual, is not a close imitation of Hals. Ravesteyn, indeed, deserves credit, and his example is valuable, as one who was simultaneously with Hals trying to inspire life into the dead bones of group painting. He succeeded quite tolerably, but he was not a Hals. He failed to equal him merely because he had not equal genius.

As one stands before the first great Doelen group by Hals at Haarlem, *The St. George's Company at Dinner* (1616), the impression which one at once receives may be summed up in the single word—Force. There is force in every inch of the huge canvas from one end to the other. It is the work of a painter rejoicing in his strength, and fully assured of it, and making the fullest use of this his first opportunity of showing it. The picture has been slightly cleaned and revarnished, in 1899 or 1900, and is in a wonderfully fine state of preservation. The figures, twelve in number, are dispersed about a table spread with plates and dishes and covered with a white linen table-cloth. In the front, and almost in the centre, sits the colonel, full face to the spectator, his figure sideways, his right arm akimbo, his left holding a beaker of wine. There is no instance among the later groups by Hals where a single figure is given quite so dominant a position. There are three more figures on the extreme right who are also in front of the table, one of these being the magnificent young ensign. On the left of the picture an extremely fine group of three sitting figures occupies the end of the table, and on the far side of the table, three sitting and two standing, are the remaining figures of the group. One of these is the second ensign, who, with his flag (a most lovely passage of colour) half folded and aslant across his shoulder, helps to break up the open space of the window. The prevailing hue of the dresses is black, and the sashes are red.

If we analyze the composition, we shall get here, at the very threshold, an insight into the general principle which Hals follows throughout in his endeavours to master this problem. He has to deal, remember, with oblong spaces, whose length is

often very great in proportion to the breadth. This shape in itself compels him to the use of an arrangement which is apt to produce painfully stiff rows of figures. Moreover, as already explained, the possible wrath of his sitters forbids him to obtain variety by sending any of them too far back into the room, or using any devices which would have deprived each owner of a face of a fair degree of prominence. His method stands declared in this first picture, and will be found to repeat itself with more or less similarity in all the larger Doelen pictures. He either places groups of three or four figures at intervals, uniting them by intermediate figures, or he disperses along the length of his picture single figures of special interest, uniting them by figures thrown more or less together into groups. Of the first method the first picture (1616) is the best example; of the second method perhaps the best example is the great picture in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam of Reynier Reael's company, which Hals designed and in large part executed, and which Pieter Codde finished.[1]

To return now to the 1616 Doelen group. The great strength of the picture in every part—it is painted from corner to corner up to full concert pitch—impresses itself upon the spectator immediately. It is the easiest of all the series to remember, hardly that which is best worth remembering. Every figure is given not only its full value, but often a good deal more than its full value. The picture is over-full of what a photographer would call definition. The figures detach themselves with almost equal assertion whether they be in the first plane or the second plane of the group. The central figure, sitting there in his too too solid flesh, is indeed an astonishing bit of detachment; but if he be compared with the figures across the table, it will be found that they go back only through the linear perspective, not by any aerial perspective. They are, in spite of

[1] If the reader is sufficiently interested in this question he may try the following experiment. Take a piece of very transparent tracing paper, and with a soft black pencil outline the heads and figures in the Doelen groups reproduced in this book. The method will be found to be suggestive, but by no means wholly conclusive; for it must be remembered that the absence of colour in the reproduction deprives some of the figures of the emphasis which they obtain through colour and projection in the original picture. The experiment, however, will aid the reader not a little.

their rearward position, painted each one up to full strength. There is little or no atmosphere, little or no blending of the figures with their surroundings. The figures come out of the picture at you, and you do not feel as if there were any air round about them. As portraits, they are real, tangible, convincing.

Frans Hals is not, of course, the only painter by a great many whose early achievement presents this same characteristic. It is an easy and natural explanation that he had not yet attained to a knowledge which was later to be added to him. And the explanation must be admitted, on any showing, to be in part of weight. Unquestionably the earlier works have not quite the same atmosphere as his later. But in the case of the 1616 group, I believe that one may call in a different explanation. An analysis of the means employed by Hals—an analysis, I fear, which one can only make, and can only understand, in presence of the picture itself—will, I think, reveal an astonishing amount of artistic artifice and consummate knowledge, though not used as he would have liked to use it if he had dared. He is wrestling with his commercial conditions and endeavouring to bring them into some sort of line with artistic conditions, and he can best do that by a bold and deliberate violation of some of these latter conditions. He sins, in fact, of *parti pris*, not of ignorance; and what is more, if he had endeavoured to carry out to the full the artistic conditions as he knew them, he would in other directions have unquestionably fallen short of many more of his conditions. He chose the lesser evil.

I will endeavour to explain what I mean by reference to the picture. The front line of figures is separated from the back line by a table covered with a white table-cloth. This table-cloth, and all that is on it, the glasses, plates, and foods, are painted with superb power and up to full strength. If you were to cut that portion out and hang it up in a frame, it would pass as a most masterly rendering of still-life objects seen close to the eye. Selecting that portion with the eye only on the group itself, and looking at it alone, it will be seen that it is very little if at all subordinated in point of strength. Look at it again in conjunction with the figures in front of it, and you will find that it obtains a subordination because of the strong interest and

detachment of the forward figures—it is a mental subordination, in fact, so far as it is there at all. And the choice of this brilliant white table-cloth, which seems at first needlessly to exaggerate the detachment of the figures, and makes fusion almost impossible, is done, I am convinced, of set purpose by Hals. If he had made his table and its equipments recede, as he ought to have done, and knew, in a sense, that he ought, and if he had avoided his violent contrast between the black silks of the forward figures and the brilliant white of his table-cloth, then presently he would have found himself in this predicament: that having duly subordinated these details to the foremost figures, by giving to them their truer pictorial value —atmosphere, in a word—then he must either have given his rearmost figures still further pictorial subordination—which was contrary to contract and commercially unsound—or else, having given his intermediate details, table and coverings as aforesaid, their due subordination, he would have had the figures behind these receding details, standing there in the same full strength as his foremost figures—a pictorial monstrosity. He chose the lesser evil, and attempted to lessen it by a masterly device, which, though it fails to be completely satisfactory, yet fails less hopelessly than any other compromise would have done.

The colour of the picture again gives one the impression—most critics have felt this—of being somewhat reddish. Some have seen in this the influence of Van Mander (many years before). I will not repeat my views on the influence of Van Mander on Frans Hals. To me a different cause is quite sufficient. The necessity or supposed necessity for painting each burgher up to full strength, coupled with Hals' intense desire for reality of likeness, certainly produces an amount of red in the flesh colours of these hale and healthy freshly-dined burghers, which, unsoftened by atmosphere, and brought out in strong contrast with the brilliant whites of the ruffs, does undoubtedly leave an impression of an over-ruddy tone. The scarlet of the sashes, again—presumably Hals had no choice here—against the black of the doublets, spreads a succession of red notes about the picture. It must be admitted that the colour resulting from these facts is not altogether pleasant. But I see in it once more the result of falsified conditions, and not

the baneful influence of poor old Van Mander, who, however, has nothing to complain of if, his executors having claimed him as Hals' teacher, his memory is called in to account for his pupil's defects.

Before we leave the 1616 Doelen group, there is one small detail in it to which I should like to draw attention. With Hals' position as a colourist we shall have often to deal as we go on. We shall find at the last that, denying to himself almost all positive colour, and leaving aside all in that kind, he was content to obtain his triumphs out of low-toned harmonies of subdued colour, and mostly out of black and gray and white. Here in this 1616 picture there is one passage of tender and delicious colour such as Velazquez might have delighted to own to. It is in the folded flag of the ensign, which crosses the window in the middle of the picture. The colours are dove gray, and silver, and pale crimson, harmonized as none but a truly great colourist knows how. And the eye, wearied with the high pressure of the rest of this great masterpiece of forceful painting, rests on that detail in peace and gratitude.

CHAPTER IX

THE MIDDLE DOELEN GROUPS

AFTER the 1616 Doelen group comes an interval of eleven years before the next shooting group, or rather pair of groups, for there are two dated in the same year, namely, 1627. Here, again, we have a mysterious gap which Scriverius, or Houbraken, or any one of them could have filled for us by five minutes of sensible writing. It is, I think, extremely difficult to account for the interval. It cannot be supposed that the good burghers of Haarlem ceased to march out, and feast, and have their portraits painted in the act, for so long a series of years. And, indeed, there are in the Rathaus at Haarlem two large shooting groups by Pieter Frans De Grebber (the younger of that name) dated 1619, though I do not know any more such groups at Haarlem painted from 1618 to 1627. It is difficult to suppose that Hals' first great group had failed to satisfy, and indeed the supply of individual portraits that came from his hands between 1616 and 1627 shows that he was now enjoying a great practice as a portrait-painter in Haarlem. The magnificent pair of portraits at the Hague, the pair at Cassel, *The Laughing Cavalier* in the Wallace Collection, all belong to that period, besides a large number of other fine portraits. We have already shown, too, that the shortcomings of the painter brought with them no social ostracism. The period, indeed, represents the first half of Hals' most productive and most prosperous day. It is difficult, therefore, to suppose that he was standing aside all that time, because his first great effort as a painter of these guild pieces was unacceptable. I have already noticed that in 1619 Pieter De Grebber painted two of these pieces, one for the St. George's Guild and one whose subject is uncertain. Both hang in the Museum at Haarlem. But from that time to 1627

14. ST. JORIS' SHOOTING COMPANY, 1627.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

there is no surviving group either by Hals, or De Grebber, or by any other. I suggest that it is possible that Hals did, in that interval, paint one or more of these pieces which have disappeared.

The disappearance of one of these enormous canvases, and by a man of such recognized value as Hals, must at first sight seem impossible, or at least extremely improbable. Unhappily it is neither. For a period of over a hundred years, falling roughly within the limits of the entire eighteenth century, but beginning earlier and ending later, the fame of Hals suffered an almost total eclipse. His name was to the average picture-buyer almost unknown, and to the picture-dealer no name to conjure by. His portraits fetched furniture prices. An example or two will suffice. In 1786 the *Acronius*, now at Berlin, was sold at auction in Haarlem for three florins (five shillings). In 1800 the full-sized portrait of Willem Van Heythuysen, now in the Liechtenstein Gallery at Vienna, was sold among the pictures of Madame Oosten de Bruyn at Haarlem for fifty-one florins (£4 5*s*.). Earlier in the century the half-length portrait, known as *The Herring Seller*, now in the possession of Lord Northbrook, was sold at Leyden by public auction for fifteen florins (£1 5*s*.), and many similar cases could be recorded. The revival, indeed, of the fame of Hals has occurred during the past century, and chiefly in the latter half of it. Amongst the many mysterious facts that attach themselves to the name of this strange man, I know none more remarkable than his plunge, some fifty years after his death, into almost total obscurity. The history of art presents us with many remarkable ups and downs in the value which the world has set upon a man's work, but none so astounding as this, and none which connect themselves with the name of quite so great an artist as this.

And for a considerable part of the period named these pictures, which are now the treasures of the town of Haarlem, were invisible, having been dismounted from their frames and rolled away in roof or cellar. The otherwise unaccountable silence of Reynolds, who gives to Van der Helst unstinted praise, but ignores Frans Hals, is to be thus explained.

My suggestion, therefore, that during a century of neglect some of these works may have been thrust on one side and

destroyed, or, at any rate, have suffered such injury that they were never allowed to see the light again, has no impossibility about it. Unfortunately, there is no record of any of these pictures, their dates or their cost, in the account books of the military guilds (a fact which bears out the view that they were not painted out of the funds of the guild, but were paid for by subscription and presented), but the absence of all record makes it impossible to test my suggestion by the only satisfactory means. Sometimes, as one wanders amongst the old Dutch towns and looks up at the cubic miles of storage room in the great empty roofs and lofts above the living rooms, one thinks of the capacity for forgotten lumber which is there. Perhaps there is treasure trove still to be unroofed in Holland which may throw light here and there on disappearances which are otherwise inexplicable.

The second and third pictures of the great Haarlem series (Nos. 86 and 87 in 1901)—both bear the same date 1627—not, perhaps, implying that both pictures were painted in that year, but that both were completed in 1627. The first of these two, No. 86, represents once more the officers of St. George's (St. Joris) Guild, and contains eleven figures (Chap. X.). The second, No. 87, represents the officers of St. Adriaen's Guild, and contains twelve figures (Chap. X.).

The eleven years have modified Hals' manner of handling, while they have added to his powers of seeing in a very noticeable way. The assertiveness of each separate portrait is no longer there; the figures do not seem ready any longer to bounce out of the frame; Hals has no longer to resort to the artifice of false values to reconcile impossibilities. Those years have established Hals as a master whose reputation is so great that his judgment must be accepted. He is no longer, as in the first group, on trial for his fame and his livelihood. He can dare to paint now as he knows and as he feels, though doubtless he both knows and feels a great deal more than he did in 1616. The handling is easier, more spontaneous, less exacting. The tawnyish tone of the first group no longer strikes one, not so much because the flesh tones are painted in a lower key, as because they are no longer hard and clean against an airless background. This time there are pleasant grayish

15. ST. ADRIAEN'S SHOOTING COMPANY, 1627.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

shadows and luminous half-tones to unite this passage with that of the picture. There is some air around the figures, and the rearward figures go back into the room of their own accord, and not through any mental acceptance of their position on the part of the spectator. You can look at these figures without strain, and without stopping to inquire what it is that is not wholly right about the picture. All is easy to the spectator because the painter himself seems to have been at his ease.

And this result is obtained without the least sacrifice of likeness and of convincing truth in the portraiture. Hals has gone forward at all points, and in that not least. These men live and move in their surroundings, and are far less detached and detachable from them than the men of the 1616 group in their startling projection. They are farther back within their frame, and, lifelike and real as they are, they yet belong to the room in which they are sitting, and are not intruding into the room in which the spectator is standing.

The whole scale of colour in these two pictures of 1627 is lower than in the 1616 group, although of varied tints there is a greater profusion. They are reduced in key, and do not attack the eye so aggressively as the tones of the first picture. Yet it is impossible to speak of the colour in either group as wholly pleasant or harmonious. Hals is evidently hampered. These gay burghers will insist on arraying themselves—like ladies at an Academy private view—in the vestments that they prefer, each without reference to other. And they must be painted in the fineries in which they have dined. Rasping juxtapositions of antagonistic colours have to be dealt with, but cannot be wholly conquered. He dares not yet fly for refuge to the abnegation of all positive hues. The result is unsuccessful, but success was not possible. There is indeed in No. 86 a passage which is positively discordant. The curtain which fills up the space on the upper left hand of the picture is a singularly unpleasant faded violet with high lights, which, besides being disagreeable in itself, positively refuses, look at it as you will, to do anything for any of the rest of the colours. I am strongly inclined to believe that we have not the colour as Hals left it. Either some of the colour has died out in the fading, leaving behind this distressing piece of upholstery, or else—which is,

I believe, the true explanation—there has been a repainting, though not quite recently. This latter view is strengthened by the fact that the handling is extremely empty, dull, and dreary, and not like Hals himself. It is, one may remark, exactly the sort of work which the restorer—who is born to set discords where harmonies were meant—fancies he can do hand over hand.

There are, however, individual passages of colour in both these groups of great charm.[1] To take two instances, I would name again the flag over the shoulder of the ensign in No. 86 (Chap. X.), and in No. 87 the window, with the softened light coming through the slightly green glass, is, though painted on this large scale, as perfect a piece of harmony as anything which Peter de Hoogh himself has ever given us. Once more, indeed, Frans Hals leads the way in big for the Dutchmen who were to follow him in little.

With reference to the composition of these groups, the principle to which attention was drawn on a previous page will be found to hold good. In both the 1627 pictures it will be found that Hals has, as it were, divided his canvas into two main groups, occupying respectively the left and right, and united by figures less closely packed across the centre. This principle is more obvious in No. 87 than in No. 86.

Before passing on from these two pictures to the St. George's Doelen picture of 1633, which hangs next to them on the left, there are one or two points of interest which it is best to notice here. The figure of the ensign who carries the folded flag across his shoulder in No. 86 is painted in a manner which will at once arrest the artist's attention, and compel examination. The figure, which, as Fromentin says, is a delicious morsel of painting, is handled more lightly and fluently than the rest, and has something in it which I think will remind us of Rubens more than perhaps anything else to which we can point in our painter's work. The handling is free, and fresh, and limpid, a brilliant and convincing sketch which looks as if it had been painted there at a sitting of inspiration and left never to be touched again—till the restorer steps in where the angel has

[1] I write of these pictures as they were a few years since. I grieve to say that in the last year No. 86 has suffered in the process of cleaning.

Hanfstängl photo.]

11. JACOB PIETERSZ OLYCAN, 1625.

(*Mauritshuis, Hague.*)

feared to tread. Again, it is interesting to note that the Jacob Olycan in No. 86, who sits five from the left at the table, on which his clenched right hand reposes (he is between the two ensigns and looks up to speak to one of them), is the same Jacob Pietersz Olycan whose portrait by Hals, painted in 1625, two years before, hangs in the Mauritshuis at the Hague. Again, in this same group the somewhat rowdy-looking person who sits sixth from the left, in front of the table, and who turns his glass upside down after emptying it, is the same man as he who stands fifth from the left end in the lower row of the 1639 St. George's group (Chap. X.), grasping a baton in his left hand. In the earlier group he has often been mistaken for Frans Hals himself, who however had, it is needless to say, no place in these groups. The man is Michielsz de Waal,[1] who when the later group was painted was fiscal of the guild. The twelve intervening years of marching and feasting have left marks upon his complexion which Hals has not forgotten to record.

[1] A separate portrait of the same man, the property of Mr. A. Sanderson, appeared in the Winter Exhibition of Old Masters, January, 1902.

CHAPTER X

THE ST. ADRIAEN'S GROUP OF 1633 AND THE ST. GEORGE'S GROUP OF 1639: THE REGENTESSEN GROUP OF 1641

WE have seen Hals in his 1616 group at the opening of his known career and again eleven years later, well on his road in the two pictures just dealt with, and we have but to move a few paces to the left in the same room to find him in his full strength in his two largest Doelen groups, the St. Adriaen's of 1633 and the St. George's of 1639. Hals is now a man between fifty and sixty years old.

The two pictures are sufficiently alike in style and handling to make it easy to pass from one to the other, regarding them both as fully developed examples of the painter's style. As a matter of personal preference, the St. Adriaen's group of 1633 appears to me to be the finer and more satisfactory picture both as regards colour and arrangement, but there are individual portions in either that might well be selected as consummate examples of his power.

Hals has kept before him, indeed, his one chief ideal in portrait painting, absolute likeness and reality, and he attains it now by a technique so consummate that, judged upon that ground alone, there is no man who ever handled a brush that can be set before him. Fromentin says in his "Maîtres d'autrefois," "as a mere technician (*practicien*) he is quite one of the most facile masters, and one of the most expert who have ever existed anywhere, even in Flanders in spite of Rubens and Van Dyck, even in Spain in spite of Velazquez." And it is impossible to deny the truth of the great French critic's words. It is not any question of whether we see, as many of us may, far more in Velazquez or in Rembrandt than we can find in Hals—that is a

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Hanfstaengl photo. Rijksmus. Haarlem.

Officers of St. Adriaen's Shooting Guild. 1633.

26. SEATED FIGURE.
(*From the St. Adriaen's Shooting Company*, 1633. *Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

different question, which we may find time to consider in some later pages—but, as a "technician" merely, it is not possible to point to any man whose achievement is so unerringly swift, brilliant, and simple. There is no littleness in his views, though his views may at times seem to take in very much the surface of things only, and though he may not seem to penetrate deep below the surface. But the painting of the soul, as we are fond of calling it, is no matter of technique. It depends on other qualities of mind and temperament which we are not at this point considering.

And Hals, who sought for absolute reality in portraiture, had his reward, even if he missed other rewards that other men aimed for and obtained. He does it by means that are wholly genuine and wholly his own, or rather, it is truer to say, that by reason of the degree of power to which he attained in them, the means are his own. Other men have followed the same road, none have gone so far in it. There have been men of brilliant technique in many countries, and there are living at this moment artists who obtain their results by the same summarized means, the same masterly knowledge, and the same kind of astounding dexterity as Hals employed. But the master of Haarlem has yet to be dethroned.

These figures live. They wear real clothes. They leave no doubt in your mind that they and their clothes looked exactly like that. They can claim that the very first purpose of their existence has been fulfilled—and it is very much to claim, though it may not be all—namely, to tell what was the external appearance of the men they represent. Perhaps some persons might have preferred that these solid burghers should have been presented to us by a Van Dyck, who would have read into them all, as he painted them, the grace, the charm, the refinement which belonged to his own nature and never seems to have failed his sitters. But does it follow that he would have given us the real men, as Hals has given them? "Charm" is indeed not the quality that can be claimed with any fitness for these works of Hals; but then neither is "charm" the quality that properly belonged to the burghers of Haarlem.

To illustrate my meaning let the reader go into the long room at Amsterdam which contains a full-length portrait of a

burgomaster by Van Dyck. It is truly Van Dyckian, and was once a very beautiful work. It has that air of a gentleman about it that all his work possesses. If Hals had had the same portrait to paint, would he have perhaps given it that same air? But it does not follow that Hals would not have given us more the man.

All that was said in the last chapter as to the increasing sense in Hals of atmosphere and envelopment, of the fusion and blending of the living figure with its surroundings, may be used again here with far more force. Hals never aimed at anything but truth; but he sees truth with different eyes from those wherewith he saw his 1616 subject. These men live and move in their own air, and not in a sort of artistic vacuum. The impression as one looks at them is wholly different, and far more reassuring. It is something indeed akin to the difference between a waxwork figure done to illusion, whose lifelikeness has something appalling in it—which even deceives you for a moment, though you feel there is something uncanny about it—and the living being who stands, and sits, and works in the room with you. You feel that you would not like to run up against that colonel, sitting there so solid in the front of the 1616 group, for fear he should hurt you; you feel that you would not like to run up against the Colonel Johann Claasz Loo, of the 1633 group, for fear you should hurt him.

This same Colonel Johann Claasz Loo, who sits in the left of the picture (p. 52), his head bare, his right hand gloved and resting on his staff, can only be described by the word superb. To begin with, Hals was this time very fortunate in his model. It is a fine type of face, full of strength and very massive, with a quiet dignity about it which makes it very impressive and very difficult to forget. It is the face of a leader of men, and the pose of the figure accords well with the quiet force of the face. It is simple and manly. There is no swagger whatever in either the figure or the face. Hals loved indeed to depict swagger when it was there, none more; but he gives it only to those to whom it belongs. This portrait is a piece of character reading, and of worthy character reading, which may give us pause when we are ready to assert that Hals could not read below the surface. It would be very difficult to point to anything finer than this in the whole range of portrait painting.

27. COLONEL JAN CLAASZ LOO.

(*From the St. Adriaen's Shooting Company*, 1633. *Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

The colonel, Jan Van Loo, who stands second from the left in the 1639 St. Adriaen's group, bears a striking resemblance to Johann Claasz, and is probably a close relative. Indeed, but for the fact that the guilds to which they belong are different, and also that there is an apparent accuracy in the preservation of the slight difference in the names of the men, one would have supposed them to be the same. The Jan Van Loo of the 1639 St. Joris group is scarcely less fine than the other; but the wearing of a large flap hat deprives us of the fine modelling of the forehead which we enjoy in the Johann Claasz Loo.

In point of composition these two pictures seem to show a weakness in Frans Hals. The 1633 group is less indeed open to criticism. The left-hand mass of that canvas groups fairly well, though not entirely well, while the right-hand portion is scattered and restless. But it is when we come to the 1639 group that we are almost driven to feel that Frans Hals had a defective sense of composition. We have already fully discussed and admitted the enormous difficulties of the problem, and need not recapitulate them. Here were twenty-two persons waiting to have lifelike portraits painted, and all agog for prominence—a colossal enterprise which needs no restating. The motive of the composition seems to be a sort of procession in double file just getting ready for its march out, the two chief officers on the left just facing round to the spectator and the rest in pairs, with one odd one in the rear to fill a space, dispersed across the picture to the right. But the motive does not explain itself, and, moreover, the proportions of the men themselves have somehow miscarried. Though all appear to be on one plane in the forefront of the picture, yet the men of the rear files are so reduced in size that the two chief officers appear to be of almost colossal bulk. And, moreover, there being no more room for files upon the right, Hals has hit upon the device, not altogether happy, of sending the remainder upstairs to the left, a marshal in the middle, his left hand outstretched, pointing out to them with apparent, and quite natural, indignation that they had better come down again. Indeed, so far as composition is concerned, the picture stands very little in front of the many ill-contrived Doelen groups by inferior masters, and it is only saved from disaster in this respect by the supreme interest of

the individual figures, which compel us to look at them one at a time to the forgetting of the whole combined. There is material here, moreover, for bringing it all together. As one looks at the pikes projecting upwards here and there about the picture—correcting, it is true, or relieving the lines of the individual figures just at the very point where each pike may be, but without any united reference to it as a whole—one is compelled, and sorrowfully, to think of Velazquez in *The Surrender of Breda*.

As we look at the colour of these two groups, especially of the later of the two, we become aware that there has been a lowering of the tone, beginning with the flesh colours, of which the shadows are now a warm gray instead of the ruddiness of the 1616 period. If you might remove certain strong patches and bands of positive colour, chiefly visible in the sashes and girdles, you would find yourself with the subdued scale of colouring which we shall presently see in a picture by Hals. But for the present that may not be. He still has to put up with discordant elements which are none of his making. There is a certain tawny orange which, worn in a sash, and especially upon black velvet, is not to be got rid of by any device known to man. It is of that peculiarly disagreeable tone dear to the taste of the Roman School, but somewhat more vivid. It refuses to be exorcised into subjection by the magic of any painter. But the burghers wore it, and Hals may not leave it out. So he had to put it in. Subdue it he could not and might not, so he had to endure it.

It was not till 1641 that the opportunity came to him of showing himself the colourist that he was, without the interference of positive colour, in a group painted in black and white and gray, and low-toned in its flesh colour. In that year he received a commission to paint the five Regenten or managers of the St. Elizabeth's Hospital (or *Oudemannhuis*)—an almshouse for old men. It is the picture which hangs at Haarlem, or should hang, next in order to the five great pictures already dealt with.

I do not believe that anyone who knows Rembrandt's pictures well, but has not got his dates at command, could ever stand before this canvas of the five "Regents" by Frans Hals

Hanfstängl photo.]

39. OFFICERS OF ST. JORIS' SHOOTING COMPANY, 1639.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

without at once finding himself jumping to the conclusion that it was painted under the influence of Rembrandt, or that its treatment was inspired by him, or even imitated from him. Fromentin did so, and did not verify his dates before he printed his notes. Other writers have done the same; Dr. Bode himself confesses to it. The picture on which this supposed influence is founded is, of course, the celebrated masterpiece of Rembrandt at Amsterdam known as the *Staalmeesters*—the five syndics of the Clothsellers' Guild, seated round their table.

Now Frans Hals painted his group of the five Regenten in 1641, and Rembrandt painted his *Staalmeesters* in 1661. If we approached these two pictures with the steadying effect of these dates upon our minds, should we see more reason to say that influence and inspiration had passed from Rembrandt to Hals than we should to say that it had passed from Hals to Rembrandt. I speak for the present, be it remembered, merely as to the evidence which one may gather from these two pictures only. There is evidence far more difficult to dispose of, as we shall presently see from another source.

But if the reader will stand before either picture holding in his hand a reproduction of the other, or, failing that opportunity, compare two reproductions, he will be able to analyze his previous conclusion in such a way as to see that it is mainly founded on the fact that both pictures are composed of five figures; that they are alike in shape and size; that in each case the men are sitting round a table; that in each the costume is the same, black cloaks, black puritan hats, white broad collars. There results from these corresponding features a strong family likeness which imposes upon the mind, and misleads to the belief that there is more similarity of style and handling than there really is. As a matter of fact, there is extremely little. The foundation of Hals' group is a greenish gray surrounding the cool fresh blacks of the figures, and warmed in parts by a browner tone; the foundation of Rembrandt's picture is a golden brown, whose tint has found its way even into the gray half-tones and even into the blacks themselves. And in handling and technique there is no resemblance. If these two pictures could be hung for a short time side by side—Fromentin suggests the experiment—we should, I think, prove to ourselves how illusory

the supposed connection is. Even with regard to its supposed Rembrandtesque warmth of background and its comparative play of warm light on a limited surface of picture, we are, I am inclined to think, misled by comparison with the earlier works of Hals in the same gallery. Compared with the colder daylight of his own earlier groups, especially the earliest, this Regenten picture of 1641 is suffused, mellow, and softened. But put it side by side with the *Staalmeesters*—how one wishes it could be done—we should wonder how we had ever come to see Rembrandt in it. I am convinced that in that case, at any rate, the independence of Hals would be seen as clearly on the evidence of the pictures themselves as it is provided for to a great extent by the evidence of dates.

Indeed, both with reference to this picture and to several others, with one notable exception (see Chap. XIV., note on the Bridgewater portrait), in which the influence of Rembrandt upon Hals has been claimed, I have found it difficult to satisfy myself of the view taken by many eminent critics, as Dr. W. Bode, Herr E. W. Moes, and others, that at this date (1641), and for a few years on either side of it, the style of Frans Hals had come strongly under the influence of Rembrandt. There are pictures by him, indeed, which do, as we stand before them, set us thinking of Rembrandt—the magnificent *Maria Voogt* (p. 109), at Amsterdam, for example, does so—but calmer analysis has nearly always shown me that the resemblance is due to some similarity of force and directness, to some masterly power of seeing which both alike possess, and not to any similarity of handling or treatment which one has borrowed from the other. It must be granted that if ever Hals saw Rembrandt's work, or Rembrandt Hals'—as without question they must have done—each must have thought much of the other, each may have absorbed insensibly some of the spirit which was moving the other. Yet each remained absolutely himself.

It may even further be granted that there is in one period of Hals' work, from perhaps 1635 onwards, a hazier, more suffused tone in the shadows, and a slightly warmer scheme of light than before; but it is not necessary to call in the influence of Rembrandt to account for this, nor is there anything to make us think that Hals could not have arrived at it if Rembrandt had

Hanfstängl photo.]

43. REGENTEN OF ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL, HAARLEM, 1641.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

never lived. And, indeed, the more one knows the two men the more one feels that there never have been two men who followed each his own line more independently with his own end in view.

I venture, therefore, to put it forth as a conclusion which is in keeping with all the evidence, that the Regenten picture of 1641 is the simple outcome of the course which Hals' colour development had been following. We have him here, let us remember, for the first time in his career—at least, for the first time of which we have any record—set free from the tyranny of coloured scarves and sashes, and highly flavoured discords of the kind, and allowed to express himself at last in a large group with low-toned harmonies of blacks and grays. And he produces out of these a masterpiece which makes us think of another masterpiece under somewhat similar conditions, painted twenty years later by another hand. The motive both of Hals' "Regenten" group (1641) and Rembrandt's *Staalmeesters* (1661) is alike—a quintette of grave and reverend seniors in black Dutch garments and sugar-loaf hats gathered around a table. It is a motive common to all the Dutch painters who had had to handle that class of picture, and is the special property neither of Rembrandt nor of Hals.

It is, however, needless to say that in this chapter I am dealing only with this question of the influence of Rembrandt on Hals, so far as any evidence can be claimed from the Regenten group of 1641. But it is obvious that the belief in that influence is not claimed upon the evidence of that picture alone, and we shall have to return to this very interesting question in a later chapter.

But meanwhile, in this connection, it is necessary and convenient to refer to the shooting company picture of 1637—known as *The Company of Captain Reynier Reael* or *La Compagnie Maigre.* The picture was begun by Hals at Amsterdam and, as we now know, was completed by Pieter Codde, and it hangs in the Rijks Museum.

Now this picture bears very closely upon our present question from two aspects. First of all it proves very completely at least one opportunity—there were probably many more[1]—

[1] Since Amsterdam is but thirteen miles from Haarlem, it is not to be supposed that Frans Hals made no other visits to the town where Rembrandt lived.

which Hals had of seeing and being influenced by the works of his younger fellow-artist. Here we have, if the influence be granted, the channel by which it may have passed from one to the other.

But far more important is its negative evidence upon this question. Here is a picture painted in 1637 in Amsterdam, where Rembrandt was then living and painting in his strength. As we have already said, it was finished by Pieter Codde. It is, however, quite easy to decide which parts were painted by Hals. For example, all the left-hand portion of the picture, some seven figures, are entirely by Hals—he never painted anything better or more his own than that delicious swaggerer the standard-bearer of the company on the extreme left (No. 38). Now this picture hangs, or did hang, close by the so-called *Night Watch* of Rembrandt, and within hail of other work by Rembrandt, so that comparison is both easy and enjoyable.

And the result of such comparison is to assure one that here we have Hals wholly himself (in the part which is his), and at his best too, and that there is no trace of Rembrandt in that personality. There is indeed trace, and plenty of it, that he was seeing with broader sight, and painting with broader sense of colour and suffusion than in his younger days.

Now let it be remembered that this picture was painted in 1637, well within the period wherein the influence of Rembrandt should have been at work; and, indeed, is claimed to have been at work in two portraits of that year in the Städel Collection at Frankfort.[1] Let it be remembered also that this picture was painted at Amsterdam, and that there if anywhere it would have been tempting to him and to his advantage to have drawn near to the style of his great rival. Can it be said that he in any sense did so in that great and somewhat overlooked group of his at Amsterdam? The question may be left to the reader to decide for himself the next time he visits the Rijks Museum. To myself, the negative evidence of the left-hand portion of that interesting group seems to be of very great weight.

[1] I do not, however, either here or later, deal with these two portraits, as serious restorations seem to me to have removed them from the region of trustworthy evidence in either direction.

38. THE STANDARD BEARER. 1637.

(*Figure from "La Compagnie maigre." Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.*)

CHAPTER XI

THE LAST TWO "REGENTEN" PICTURES, 1664

THE last two pictures of the great series at Haarlem, representing respectively the five men Regenten of the old men's almshouse and the five women Regentessen of the same, have a singularly pathetic interest. It is difficult to criticise them in cold blood. One is almost compelled to view them through the mists that had gathered round the old man's life.

Hals was sixty-one when in 1641 he had painted the great Regenten picture which we looked at together in the last chapter. Twenty-three years had passed when, at the age of eighty-four, and in 1664, he painted the last two of the series. They had been the downhill years of the old man's life. The chapter on his biography will have told the reader of his troubles —self-begotten or no, matters little for our purpose. So early as 1641 we have seen him in arrear, apparently, of his subscription to the Guild of Saint Lucas. In 1652, the painter being then seventy-two, came the distress warrant which Jan Ykess the baker obtained against him. The inventory of the goods which, on that occasion, were held in pledge, is still preserved at Haarlem. Three mattresses and bolsters with their appurtenances; an armoire; an oak-table and five pictures. If that is all there was, there was meagre comfort in that home. No mention is made of any easels, or canvases, or other artistic plant; from which one may guess that either the law of Holland had that merciful reserve whereby a distress warrant may not include the tools with which the workman earns his living, or else, and more probably, because Frans Hals was still struggling on with his teaching studio elsewhere, and kept such plant as he possessed in that and not in the living room.

It was in the spring of 1664 that the municipality had granted to Hals the gift of a load or two of peat fuel and the pension of 200 Carolus gulden a year; and in the light of that kindly alms-gift one can read pretty plainly that these two Regenten pictures were a charity commission—a wise way of help to the old man which has had the effect of benefiting many more people than were thought of then. They complete for us the survey of an entire career, not, it is true, seen year after year in unbroken continuity, but intercepted for us at intervals. It is for us to attempt, and to some extent we are able to do this, to fill in the gaps later by reference to the portraits, fairly numerous, which are scattered in twos and threes and sixes about the various museums of Europe.

The first Regenten picture was painted in 1641, and stands very nearly halfway between the 1616 Doelen picture and these 1664 groups. For our purpose we may indeed consider it the halfway house of Frans Hals' artistic career, so far as its evidences are left to us. And it marks off a period, with tolerable nearness, of the greatest importance to those who are ready to take trouble enough to understand the whole career. We have several times already indicated the tendency on Frans Hals' part to eliminate gradually, so far as it was open to him, the positive and more violent elements of colour, till he reduces himself to the harmonies which can be obtained from the blacks and whites and grays, modulated and toned by the play of light, and still more by the reducing effect of half-light and of shadow. We have seen him trying to effect this by the gradual softening down of strong contrast, such as he had used in his first Doelen group, down to the great St. George's group of 1639. It had been, in spite of himself, an unsuccessful struggle, for so long as burghers will insist on turning out on feast days in brilliant black velvet with rasping tawny-orange scarves, so long must the unhappy artist suffer for the discord. But the steady change which had come over Hals in his manner of seeing colour is, in spite of these enforced discrepancies, quite distinctly to be traced even in his treatment of the accessories of his pictures.

But in his handling of flesh colour the change of practice is even more certainly to be followed. It has been from the first growing steadily lower in tone, and, above all, in the flesh

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Hanfstangl, photo. Rathaus Haarlem.

Regentessen of the Oudevrouwenhuis. 1664.

shadows he has been passing down through warmish flesh grays to pure grays, and into almost absolute blacks—the latter, when he reaches it, being indeed an idiosyncrasy carried on almost to crime. At no period of Hals' career—unless it may have been in that Antwerp or earliest Haarlem period whose evidences are a blank to us—had he ever used for his flesh shadows that warm red transparent flesh colour which Rubens and Van Dyck habitually use, in which one seems to see the warm blood shining up through the translucent flesh. If the reader will go and study, for instance, a genuine unrestored hand which Rubens or Van Dyck painted, he will at once see the difference which Frans Hals even in his early days presents. The fingers of a Rubens portrait are divided from one another by warm, transparent, juicy lines of separation. The same lines in a Hals' portrait, where the hands are visible, are even in his earliest works a warm gray. Up to the year 1639, in which he painted his great portrait of Madame Van der Meer (No. 40) (Van der Hoop Collection, Amsterdam), this method of handling flesh shadows has only undergone such change that it assumes a somewhat greener tint amongst the gray, and where the sitter is old, as in that case, it does not offend against the possibilities of flesh colour. Indeed, you have to be on the look-out for it to see it, so entirely is the characteristic carried away by the superb reality and masterly artistry of the picture as a whole.

But after the year 1641, in which he painted his first Regenten group, the onward change from grays to almost blacks (occasionally) is so distinct and so rapid that I know of no recognized change of style in the career of any of the great artists which can be asserted with so much safety and timed so definitely within its dates. The three periods into which the styles of Murillo have been divided; the steps by which Raphael passed from the painter of the little *Vision of the Knight* in the National Gallery to him of the *Julius the Second* in the same gallery, and thence to *The Burning of the Borgo* in the Stanze of the Vatican; the passage by which the Rembrandt of the Hague portrait became the Rembrandt of the *Staalmeesters*; or the Velazquez of *The Nativity* in the National Gallery became the Velazquez of *Las Meniñas* in the Prado; all these may be felt, traced, accepted; but they are far more difficult of defini-

tion; they admit of far less inclosing within the limits of fixed dates and of particular picture frames, and they are far more elusive and intangible, than the "Black Period," if one may be allowed to create a name for it, of Frans Hals.

Moreover, in most men's careers these changes—and they occur in all careers whether of the great or of the small—do not go unfalteringly forward with never a looking-back. Rather are they like the progress of a rising tide, which, as you watch it coming up a sloping beach, seems at one moment to be losing a foot and at another moment to be gaining two feet; and there is always an overlapping, so that a painter will sometimes have painted you a picture in one year which seems to be a going back to a period earlier than what he painted last year. The advance does not by any means always imply a necessary gain. It is as it is with human beings. The passage from boy to man implies a growth of strength, but it does not always imply a growth in sweetness, simplicity, or purity.

Again, many men, most men perhaps, whose art has undergone a great change from youth to age, surprise one at times by some manifestation of a return to the way in which they saw in their youth—like Falstaff babbling of green fields. There is no sign of any of these reversions in Frans Hals.

In fact, after 1641, it will be found that not only did he never again employ any positive or vivid colour whatever in the accessories of his portraits, and, indeed, hardly ever anything which we call colour, even subdued colour, at all; but his flesh tones become much lower, and, above all, the flesh shadows duskier and tending to blackness. At first this last trait is not so strongly pronounced, but as we get farther onwards from the year 1641 the tendency increases, and in one or two extreme instances, especially the *Professor Jan Hornebeek* of the Brussels Gallery (1645), the *René Descartes* of the Louvre (1655), the *Hille Bobbe* (1650), and the *Tyman Oosdorp* (1656) of the Berlin Gallery, flesh shadows are in places absolutely black.

This statement can be tested with tolerable ease. If the reader will turn to the list of portraits painted by Frans Hals after 1641, and will, as he visits the various galleries which contain them, direct his attention to the point, he will find that

every picture on the list will bear out the statement, presenting the feature with more or less distinctness, though not always to the same aggravated extent.

He was working from that date (1641) with a very restricted palette—the result, no doubt, of deliberate preference, but not wholly inconvenient also to him, when viewed in the light of his probably strained relations with his colourman. I believe that the examination of all these later pictures after 1641 by any experienced artist would give the following as Frans Hals' palette: Black, white, yellow ochre, a red, a blue — cheap colours, probably, though good and sound, as the condition of his pictures proclaims. The luxuries of lakes and carmines had been long left behind. We shall have to see the brilliant results which he got out of this limited palette when we have to consider some of the individual portraits. It would be inconvenient to step aside to do this now.

Commissions had for many years been few and far between. From 1655 to 1660 there are only some six portraits or so to speak to with certainty. Of these several are apparently casual sitters, cheap commissions, paying, it may be supposed, a very few dollars beyond the price of paint and canvas. *The Man in the Slouch Hat*, for instance (No. 49) of the Cassel Gallery, 1660, was, I take it, not a highly-paid performance for all its magnificent dexterity. The two commissions of 1664, coming as they did on the top of the present of peat fuel and of the parish pension, must have been a godsend to the poverty-stricken old couple.

I must at once warn the reader that no reproduction, however excellent, can do otherwise than give a false and unduly unfavourable impression of these works, especially in the case of the five men Regenten (No. 51). The hand of Hals was indeed failing now and tremulous, though the eye saw and the brain felt. But it had not failed so completely as one is misled into thinking at sight of a photographic reproduction alone. Hals in his strength can paint a hand with summary, consummate knowledge, such as no man ever surpassed. He essayed the same, to put into practice superb knowledge, here again, but his own hand has failed him. At no point of distance which the room permits will these men's hands come into complete

coherence. Yet they are not the mere set of ichthyosaurus flappers which a reproduction, through no fault of its own, compels you to believe. The black shadows of the hands come out without gradation, causing the eye to follow down the edge of the whites only. If the reader will stand before the original and hold a reproduction in his hand, he will see the unavoidable wrong that is done to the painter, who, it must be admitted in this case, cannot afford to throw away any of his drawing.

The five old men Regents are on the whole painted with more signs of weakness than the five women Regents. The handling seems to totter. One cannot claim for them in one or two cases that the likenesses seem any longer convincing. Yet Hals never did anything more wholly desirable than the head of the serving-man seen in half-tone on the upper extreme right. The picture indeed, as a piece of tone, fascinates one the more the longer one looks at it. One forgives, sympathizes with, pities all the signs of failing power, for there is over it all that inexpressible stamp of largeness which makes the failing hand of a great one more impressive than the most vigorous activities of a less one. And, indeed, there are passages in the picture where the word failure may be flung aside with little fear. The handling of the black and of the white in the right-hand figure is one of those delicious bits of mere paint that you are ready to look at and enjoy when you have exhausted the deeper essences of a picture. There is only one bit of colour in the picture, a subdued and smoky patch of red on the knee of that same figure. It helps the blacks of the figures in that corner of the painting.

The group of old women Regents (No. 50), as I have said, is, so far as strength of portraiture goes, distinctly a stronger effort, and it is less open to criticism on the score of drawing, though, on the other hand, it lacks the breadth and unity of vision of the old men Regents. The rendering of the hands, for example, not only does not fail to express its meaning; it gives, on the contrary, very great expression of character to the various sitters. The whole thing is indeed a fine piece of reading on the old painter's part. These five old ladies, so grimly respectable, so austerely benevolent, so reproachfully prim and well-kept, must

Hanfstängl photo.]

51. REGENTEN OF THE OUDEMANNENHUIS, HAARLEM, 1664.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

have been no small terror to their defaulting sisters who appeared before them—as possibly Mrs. Hals had done—on a charge of poverty. Hals probably felt their terror himself. There is something in his interpretation of these wonderful old dames that calls out the old humour of the man—some memory of the old magic with which he once went straight to the character of his laughing cavalier, his lute-playing jester, his cackling old fish-wife. They are very stiff and starched, these old Dutch ladies, as they sit bolt up in all the pride of their rectitude and their good housewifery; but they are alive and real. They have, as I think most who know the picture will feel, the quality of making you remember them long after you are away from them. Even amongst the unforgetable portraits which Hals painted in his earlier days, I hardly know one which stays with one more vividly than that of the prim old dame on the right of this picture. Certainly a wonderful performance for a man of eighty-four, and one which was possible only to a great artist. It was to be his last achievement, completing the great series in the Museum of Haarlem, so typical from one end to the other both of the artist's life and the man's life, beginning with the young man rejoicing in his strength, in the feasting and the revelry, seen with clear, defiant eyes with his life still in front of him, and ending in the vision of the poorhouse seen with eyes that have learnt everything now about the half-lights and the shadows, and painted with the hand that has not lost its cunning, but has lost the physical power that would enforce it.

If it be true that pathos and humour lie very close to one another, then I know of no instance where the conjunction may be observed so well as in this great series in the Rathaus at Haarlem.

CHAPTER XII

OTHER PORTRAITS: THE FIRST PERIOD

IT has seemed most convenient to deal consecutively in the last few chapters with the great series at Haarlem, because they do, on the whole, present the painter at one end and at the other as well as in the middle of his career. But it need not be said that a complete understanding of the man could not be gained from that series alone. A great deal of reading between the lines of these pictures is necessary to the formation of the views which I have already tried to set before the reader. The filling-in can be obtained only from a knowledge of some considerable number of the portraits by the master which hang in the various galleries of Europe. These are, fortunately, fairly numerous, and, more fortunately still, so fairly dispersed over the painter's entire career that they enable us, when compared and viewed alongside of the great Haarlem series, to realize the man very completely. To examine these portraits, so far as they are necessary to this realization, is now our task.

I do not propose to take all the portraits which hang under the name of Hals in all the galleries. There are few tasks more monotonous both to writer and to reader than the wading through details of portraits, often of unknown persons, or of persons of no interest, the portraits themselves inaccessible, practically, to most readers. I shall merely deal with a selection chosen chiefly from the galleries most easily accessible from England, in Holland, Belgium, France; going further afield only where the picture is indispensable to the subject. To attempt to do more than this is merely to write an enlarged catalogue. And, indeed, I trust the reader has already realized the difficulty which is involved in writing of the career of a man whose work, consisting of portraits only (for his so-called

"genre" pictures are merely portraits in which the astonishing expression of character at a given moment in the individual makes us forget the individual in the character), involves a monotony from which one cannot escape.

A survey of the portraits which Frans Hals painted will disabuse the mind of at least one prejudice concerning the great painter. It will go far to put an end in us to the view, which has been expressed by many writers, that Hals was a mere painter of externals; one who caught the surface peculiarities of a man and could present them to us with astonishing verve and vraisemblance—much, indeed, like Charles Dickens in literature—but who did not penetrate beneath the surface, or read the inner man very subtly. One may fully grant that Frans Hals was not a thinker in the sense in which Rembrandt, Velazquez, and even Van Dyck, were thinkers; and there are, I dare say, very few of us who have not at some time or other, in standing before one of Hals' brilliant, dashing bits of rapid character-catching, found ourselves expressing the inward doubt whether Hals realized that his sitters had souls at all. The injustice is due, I am persuaded, to the fact that few people have ever taken the trouble to view Hals as a whole. For some reason there has been an unconscious conspiracy, both among picture-lovers and writers, to think of him through one or two of his most astonishing and indeed incomparable achievements as a rapid setter-down of facial expression. But anyone who has stood long before the gentleman (No. 7) and his wife (No. 8) of the Cassel Gallery; the *Jacob Olycan* (No. 11) and *Aletta Hanemans* (No. 12) of the Hague; the *Albert Van der Meer* (No. 23) and his wife (No. 24) of Haarlem; the Beresteyn pair of the Louvre (Nos. 16 and 17); the old housewife of the same gallery (No. 18), and, above all, the consummate portrait of *Maria Voogt*, 1639, at Amsterdam (No. 40), not to speak of many others, will have to reconsider his verdict. Hals has shown himself in these to be as perfectly capable of handling a worthy face with quiet dignity and full insight—remember that his sitters were Dutch, who do not carry their souls upon their faces, nor their hearts upon their sleeves—as he was capable of setting down the rapidly-passing expression of his *Laughing Cavalier* (No. 9), his *Jester* at Amsterdam (No. 19), his

Gipsy Girl of the Louvre (No. 20), and his *Hille Bobbe* (No. 46) of Berlin. The fact that he painted these latter, and more like them, has no business to rob him of his reputation as a great translator of the more worthy moods of man, which is due to him on the evidence of a far larger body of witnesses. For if the list of his portraits be perused, it will be found that these laughing drinkers and jesters, by which the world has insisted on judging him, are in quite a small minority. The minority would be probably far more strikingly small, if anything like the tale of his output had survived to us.

And I shall make no separate classification for one kind of portrait and the other. As I have already said, his jesters, his gipsies, his mountebanks, his fisher-boys, or his fishwives, are just as much portraits as the others. The fact that he very likely picked some of his models up in his pothouse, and others in the street, and others by the roadside, or by Zandvoort dunes, or in the Haarlem fish-market, and carried them off in triumph to his studio, does not make them a whit less portraits. These were the only kind of sitters who would consent to have their portraits painted to go down to posterity with a face convulsed with laughter, or contorted with some passing expression. He must either use that kind of sitter—not but what I quite admit that Hals probably got great amusement from their company—or abandon that field of art—facial expression under rapid change, which was the problem he was mastering. They are not a wholly edifying set of sitters, far from it; but the artist who wants to get a model who will sit to him with a broad grin on his face will not find his man among the high-bred, the serious, the refined. The man who will sit in a studio with a stoup of ale on his knee and laugh boisterously at little or nothing at all, between the drains, is not a refined person. But he gets the lines of his face into the shapes which express laughter more frequently than the doctor of laws or the professor of mathematics, and Hals can get what he wants from him, and perhaps a rough joke or two into the bargain.

The earliest portrait of Hals which is known to survive is, I am told by Dr. Bredius, in private hands in France. It is the portrait of Pieter Schrijver, known in his Latin style as Dr. Scriverius, of Haarlem, a poet, man of letters, and writer upon

Hanfstaengl photo. Lord Northbrook

Pieter Van der Morsch, 1616.

art, and it is said to date from 1613. I am sorry to say that I have neither been able to see the picture nor to obtain a reproduction for this book. I believe that I am right in saying that it is of no great size, and, except for the interest of its early date, not of great importance.

The next in order, if the date upon the picture be correct, is the well-known portrait of Pieter Van der Morsch, in the possession of Lord Northbrook, which passes under the name of *The Herring Seller*, because Van der Morsch is represented holding a basket of red herrings under his left arm, while with his right hand he holds up one of the fish. Pieter Van der Morsch was the messenger of the Mayor and Corporation of Leyden, and a portrait of him is in the museum of that town. He was, besides being the municipal messenger, which one may take to have been a kind of glorified beadle, "a member of the Chamber of Rhetoric," a dignity which I have previously discounted in some remarks on those very expansive and all-embracing institutions in the chapter on the biography of Hals. I trust that I shall not be called upon to explain in what connection with either of these functions Pieter Van der Morsch was caught by Hals in the act of selling or otherwise exhibiting red herrings.

The picture is an undoubted Hals, and of fine quality, but I confess that without the date on the left of the picture I should have supposed it had belonged to a much later period. Perhaps the alteration of the last figure but one may have occurred at some past date when the picture was cleaned or revarnished. The general tone of the picture is low, the black dress of the man merging into the dark grayish green of the background. The flesh tones also are lower and more suffused than is quite usual with Hals at so early a date. The inscription tells us that Pieter Van der Morsch was seventy-three when this portrait was painted. At the right-hand upper corner hangs a shield carrying a half unicorn rising from the water—Van der Morsch probably meaning "from the morass." The Van der Morsch family had emerged with its fortunes, one may surmise, as many another Dutchman has, out of the marsh reclaimed to a polder.

It is the somewhat heavy and not very quick-witted face of an old man who has lived a good deal in the open air. There is a good deal of character in the face. He would have been a

difficult man to prevail over in argument, or to get the better of in a deal over herrings. Van der Morsch looks like a man of his own opinion, as a high-class beadle is ever bound to be; and he wears his best municipal black cloak and ruff with a dignity which is a little at variance with, or at any rate must be said barely to carry off, the herring basket. Hals indeed has shown a very fully developed power of setting down characteristics which are by no means quite the easiest to express; and if I felt absolutely assured of the date I should claim it decisively as another proof that Frans Hals' mastery in the year 1616 could only be the outcome of long and varied practice.

Of the same year 1616 is a portrait group of three persons, known as *The Merry Trio* (No. 4), now in America; but a most admirable copy, said to be from the hand of Dirk Hals, which, we are told, varies in very slight particulars from the original,[1] hangs in the Museum at Berlin. Even the copy declares itself as a very enjoyable work. It would, however, be a waste of time to criticise the handling or style of the picture which cannot any longer be compared with its original. But Hals' command of facial expression shows itself in the young girl's face in as emphatic, and necessarily in a more pleasing, shape than even in the great Doelen picture of that year. The sitters do not, apparently, come from the highest class of society. If the triumphal crown which the girl in the background waves over the heads of the loving couple be really, as it seems certain, one of those elongated sausages in which the Dutch provision shops rejoice, then the allusion to the occupation of the man seems tolerably obvious, and the man's type is justified. The girl, on the other hand, is cast in a less unrefined mould, and may fairly claim to have got the worst of the bargain.

We find ourselves, perhaps, on more certain ground as we stand before two portraits in the Cassel Gallery which bear the date of 1620, and, their identity being lost, are catalogued as a *Dutch Nobleman* (No. 7) and a *Noble Lady* (No. 8)—man and wife. Of this pair the portrait of the lady is the more desirable merely because the restorer or cleaner—it is difficult to walk among the wrecks of once noble pictures at Cassel and preserve

[1] Another variation from the same original is mentioned in the Berlin Catalogue as having been sold at the Beurnonville sale in Paris, May, 1881.

A Dutch Nobleman, 1620.

Hanfstaengl photo Cassel Gallery

A Dutch Lady, 1620.

moderation of speech—has slightly injured and weakened the surface of the man's portrait in parts. But even as it stands it is an extremely fine work. It shows Hals capable of interpreting and painting a gentleman—the man is emphatically that—and of rendering a strong and thoughtful face with as much certainty of perception as he brings to the most empty-brained of his swashbucklers, the most impudent of his mountebanks.

This picture gains strangely upon one as one watches it. And here let me say at once that this is a quality which will be found to be true of all Hals' work. I know no man who so needs to be known: I know no man who when known improves so through acquaintance. It is a quiet, restrained, dignified presentment of an interesting personality. The man looks like a thinker as well as a man of action. There is no swagger in the pose, but there is great strength and self-reliance. This was the type of man who helped to win his country back for itself—and Hals has dealt worthily with a worthy theme.

There is very little colour except a little blue and red and gold in the carefully wrought belt. The flesh shadows are warm gray, the light beard and rather darker hair being very softly rendered (we shall have to say something of Hals' manner of dealing with hair in a later chapter). The modelling of the face is admirable and quite without haste or bravado; restrained, and the means very subtle and not visible, yet convincing.

The ruff is superbly rendered. At a little distance you see its soft quality, as light to the touch as the plumage of a bird. The cuffs are painted with care, but they are got at, not by piecemeal imitation, but by well-considered simplification. The hands are finely modelled, and with complete and summarized knowledge, as in every genuine picture by Frans Hals. The right hand, however, in this picture has, on its under surface, the look of having been laid on a dusty table, the cleaner having apparently removed some of the flesh tints, thereby leaving the under painting to show through.

When one turns from this masterly portrait to the picture of the lady, there comes, at the first flash of thought, a curious memory of some of Sanchez Coello's Spanish princesses, especially one of great charm which hangs in the Prado at

Madrid. Now there is absolutely no resemblance between the styles of Sanchez Coello and of Hals—it would be difficult to choose two painters more unlike. The connection of thought is merely due to the fact that each picture gives one a comely young woman, placed upon a canvas with a certain direct simplicity, and decked in broidery of cloth of gold and jewelleries. It is, of course, merely one of those cases where similarity of subject calls up a reminiscence of some other painter, and it is worth mentioning only because it helps to explain how in some of Hals' other work we are perhaps betrayed into seeing the influence of Rubens (as in a portrait of a man at Frankfort and the Beresteyn group in the Louvre) or of Rembrandt (*Madame Van der Meer*, No. 40, and the *Regenten*, No. 51), whereas memory is playing tricks with us, and confusing the issues between likeness of style in the painter and likeness of style in the sitter.

But this suggestion of Coello—which is, of course, wholly illusory—is worth following out for a moment for another reason. It is worth considering the different means by which the Spanish primitive painter obtains his result—a very charming one—as compared with Hals. The first paints you, touch by touch, his chains, his bracelets, his tiara, link by link, and gem by gem, with precision so great that if you called in a fairly capable goldsmith, of little or no intelligence, he could use them as a pattern and produce you an exact facsimile. Hals obtains his result by summarized knowledge, letting his line lose itself and find itself again, a flash on a link, a sparkle on a gem suggesting all to the eye with a completeness which is fully as complete as the literal word for word translation of the other man. Call in a really intelligent goldsmith to this work of Hals, and he would find it quite as easy as, or even easier than, the other to understand and reproduce from, but it would not do to make a tracing from, nor give as a pattern to one of his unintelligent apprentices.

At the same time I must guard myself against seeming to say that this portrait of the lady at Cassel is handled in its details in the fullest and most summary style of Hals. It is, on the contrary, as compared with many of his works, and even with the portrait of the husband, handled in a reserved and restrained manner, which at once gives me the opportunity to

[illegible] of Hals—it would be difficult [illegible] The connection of [illegible] [illegible] with a certain direct simplicity [illegible] of gold and jewellery [illegible] [illegible] some other painter, and it is worth [illegible] to explain [illegible] [illegible] at Frankfort [illegible] of Rembrandt (*Madame* [illegible] *Regents*, No. 51) [illegible] and confusing [illegible] style [illegible] [illegible] which is, of course, [illegible] [illegible] for another [illegible] the different means by which the Spa[illegible] [illegible] result—a very charming [illegible] [illegible] first [illegible] touch by touch, [illegible] link by link, and gem by [illegible] [illegible] he could use them as a [illegible] [illegible] obtains [illegible] [illegible] his line [illegible] [illegible] is fully as complete [illegible] [illegible] of the other man. [illegible] [illegible] to this work of Hals, and [illegible] [illegible] than the other [illegible] [illegible] but it would not do to [illegible] [illegible] as a pattern to one of his [illegible]

[illegible] I must guard myself against [illegible] [illegible] of the lady at Cassel is handled [illegible] [illegible] most summary style of Hals. [illegible] [illegible] many of his [illegible], and [illegible] [illegible] husband, handled in a [illegible] [illegible] at once give [illegible] the [illegible]

Hanfstängl, photo.

Mauritshuis Hague

Aletta Hanemans, 1625.

draw attention to a most noticeable trait in this artist. Wherever comparison can be made through two portraits, generally of man and wife, bearing the same date, it will be found that Hals attacks his women's portraits in a far more restrained, precise, and less summarized manner than the men's. The most convenient pairs through which to test the truth of this statement are: the Cassel pair under consideration; the Olycan pair at the Hague (Nos. 11 and 12); the Beresteyn pair (Nos. 16 and 17) in the Louvre, and the Van Nierop or Van der Meer pair (Nos. 23 and 24) at Haarlem. The trait is a very singular one, and it runs throughout the work of the painter with such uniformity, even presenting itself in the last two Regenten groups, as to be of very great importance to us in attempting to assign dates to undated pictures. If all the pictures of Hals could be consigned to oblivion for a time, and meanwhile all the dates removed, we should, I am convinced, in trying to construct a sequence for the unknown artist's works, find ourselves assigning these women's portraits in all cases to an earlier period by many years than those of the corresponding men.

Now this trait needs explanation. It is obvious that the flash of a gold chain, the hide and seek lines of a cambric ruff, the broad sheen on new satin, and all the other accidents of texture and surface are alike, whether they appear in the dress of a man or a woman. Yet Hals, handling them in either case with quite masterly ease, does quite unmistakeably handle these incidents in a man's portrait with a far more trenchant and astounding force of hand than when he is setting himself to deliver to one his translation of a woman.

I believe that the reader will have no difficulty in persuading himself, as I have, that this is a deliberate and designed part of Hals' method. It is beyond question that his vigorous, free handling of his men's portraits does somehow enhance the idea of strength which he wishes us to derive from them. And it is equally certain that the somewhat more reserved and more sedate style of the women's portraits does help to give to them the air of quiet which we see in them. Indeed, those who have seen in Hals merely the brilliant slap-dash technician could never have formed that opinion if they had seen his women's portraits alone. The Dutch lady of North Holland, and it was

thence that nearly all Hals' sitters came—it is extremely rare to find any of the animated dark-eyed Zeelanders among his sitters—is not vivacious of face or quick of glance, but she is quiet and simple of demeanour, self-possessed and good-humoured. And these characteristics Hals gives one quite completely, helping himself to obtain them by a certain gravity in his handling. What he might have done, or not done, if his sitters had had the grace, the refinement, the vivacity of Van Dyck's English and Italian sitters, is neither here nor there. We have no right to claim that Hals should produce from his sitters qualities which did not belong to them.

This portrait of the young married woman at Cassel is entirely delightful. I have dwelt at some length on it, and on its companion, because they introduce and are typical of quite a number of fine works which may thus be handled in less monotonous detail.

Of very similar character and of equally fine quality are the pair of portraits at the Hague, Jacob Olycan (No. 11) and his wife Aletta Hanemans (No. 12), and here, indeed, the male portrait enjoys the advantage of being in the finest and most undisturbed condition. Indeed, it may here be said that, probably owing to the very simple, sound, and direct methods employed by Hals, his pictures as a rule stand in as little need of restoration as those of any painter. And to alter the surface of a Hals or a Velazquez is as great a crime and about as great a folly as it would be to re-chip the surface of one of Michelangelo's statues. This portrait of Jacob Olycan and his wife are superb examples of the master. They were painted in 1625, five years later than the Cassel pair, but they present no difference of style or of treatment. One may be content merely to observe, therefore, that the face of the wife, who is eighteen years of age, looks very many years older, the close cap which hides most of the hair having this effect, as may be noticed in Holland of the present day. Also it is an interesting point to note that the striped skirt which both they and the Cassel lady wear survives, though in a humbler material and under aniline variation, in the peasant costume of to-day of one village, and one only, so far as I know, in Holland, namely, Volendam.

One year before Hals had completed the Olycan pair, he

[illegible]

[illegible] of equally fine [illegible] (No. 11) [illegible] indeed, the [illegible] in the first and most [illegible] said that [illegible] and [illegible] little need of [illegible] or the [illegible] and about as [illegible] of one of [illegible] and his [illegible] were painted in 16[illegible] they present no difference [illegible] be content merely [illegible] who is eighteen years [illegible] the close cap which [illegible] may be [illegible] in Holland [illegible] point to [illegible] and the Cassel lady [illegible] and under an line [illegible] day of one village, and one only [illegible] Volendam.

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Hanfstaengl photo — Wallace Collection

The Laughing Cavalier. 1624.

had painted his *Portrait of an Officer*—known as *The Laughing Cavalier*—of the Wallace Collection, 1624. Of Hals' work accessible in public galleries of England, no more striking specimen exists. Here, indeed, we have the painter rejoicing in the interpretation of a phase of character which had particular attractions for him. The cavalier is a young, well-fed, well-kept soldier, quite satisfied with himself, and evidently quite untroubled by any of those deeper searchings of the mind which are apt to leave their print upon the face. The smile upon his face is certainly one of the most irresistible things that ever was painted. It is not a laugh, nor a leer, nor a grin, but a smile which seems ready to burst into a laugh, and, as you watch the face, it takes slight and rapid variations of expression, so that you seem to see the look which has just passed and that which is just to come. No doubt there is a certain air of swagger—a characteristic which Hals always enjoyed the rendering of. But this is no mere swaggerer or swashbuckler. On the contrary, there is a force and even a fineness about the handsome brows that tell you this would be a bad man to have to meet in an encounter, and a good man to have to follow to one. Stand before this man's portrait, and you can weave for him a history. There is something more than mere swagger in that self-assertive smile. He looks out at you with an air of supreme contempt at one moment, of supreme good-nature at another; but the expression is full of changefulness, full of that electric current which plays over the human face and tells you while you look at it at one moment what to expect from the next.

This was not a reader or a thinker, but he was not a mere vapourer or a mere braggart, like the *Merry Toper* of the Amsterdam Gallery (No. 36). A fighter, you may make oath upon that, and a man of action when he is wanted.

Technically it is of the highest merit, and is nearly, if not quite, as it left the painter's hands. Even as it hangs on that wall in the company of Rembrandt, of Van Dyck, of Velazquez, it yields to none in that particular. It is for a man's portrait more highly wrought than is his wont. The handling is not so fierce, if one may use the expression, as, for example, in his Doelen pictures. It represents the halfway between the *St. Joris* of 1616 and the *St. Joris* of 1627. Viewed close, the detail is

somewhat more exact and less the production of summarized knowledge than is often the case. Even the lace collar is, for a man's portrait by him, highly wrought.

There is no strong colour in the picture. The elaborate broidery is all in low-toned orange yellow on a cloth of blue gray. There is not a bit of pure vermilion, or crimson, or blue in the picture. And yet the impression left by the picture certainly is that its scale is somewhat higher than many of Hals' individual portraits. The explanation lies doubtless in the fact that the picture is slightly wanting in atmosphere, and does not go behind its frame.

To the same year as the Wallace Collection *Cavalier*, 1624, has been assigned the portrait of Frans Hals himself with his second wife, Lysbeth Reyniers, which hangs in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam. I do not know if there is any evidence in support of that date. Presumably not, since it has even been assigned by some authorities to one of the earlier years immediately after the marriage of the heedless pair in 1617. But, for my own part, I should greatly prefer to assign it even to a later date than 1624—at earliest 1627. Indeed it bears, especially in the tone and feeling of the background in which it is set, some analogies to the Doelen group of that year, 1627. It is true that this postdating increases the age of the couple. Still, forty-seven for the man and twenty-eight or so for the woman, are not impossible for the pair who are there presented, though I admit that one would be inclined to estimate them at less. But if we were to place this portrait beside the Wallace *Cavalier*, we should see good reason to agree to the interval. I am not, however, prepared to do battle for my dating, as it involves no serious point of importance in the history of Frans Hals' art, and for the sake of convenience we will consider the picture here.

The portrait of an artist by himself is always an interesting study, not merely because it gives us his personality, but also because it pretty surely gives us his handiwork at its best, or what he meant to be its best, at the date. The man who paints his own portrait puts, it may be well expected, his whole strength into it, and produces in most cases a result which shows both him and his work at their best. And here in this

Hanfstaengl photo — Rijks Museum Amsterdam

Frans Hals and Lysbeth Reyniers.

portrait of himself and his wife we have Hals painting himself in a likeness which we may be sure was as convincing as he could make it, but with, we may be equally sure, no unfavourable bias. He and his wife are there in their best clothes, in their pleasantest expressions, in their most prosperous hour. The world was going pretty well with Hals about that time. There is a palace and a terraced garden, where fountains play and courtiers walk and a peacock struts in this vision of his; the poorhouse and the parish allowance had not entered into it yet. It is meant to be a sumptuous rendering—probably painted when he was in very good case, just after the gulden had come in, perhaps for one of the Doelen groups.

The picture itself contains several admirable and interesting points as well as several faults, and, upon the whole, it has received rather more praise than is quite its due—at any rate, as compared with much of Hals' work. The faces are excellent and carry with them the assurance of likeness. The textures of the dress are handled as usual with masterly ease, and, above all, the colour of the picture is harmonious and enjoyable. One piece of pale red about the throat and chest of the wife is a sparing note of colour, placed there with an effect which would have been lost if the colour had been multiplied or repeated. But what strikes one most in the picture is a certain sense of decorative effect which is more than once apparent in the work of Frans Hals—for example, in the St. Adriaen Doelen group of 1627, and in the Heythuysen portrait of the Liechtenstein Gallery—but which is left aside presently, as were other possible directions of his art, in the one absorbing aim which he set before himself. In this picture the leaves of the trees are not dealt with realistically, but in warm brown, conventional tones against a blue sky, which in turn is broken into below by fountain and statue of the same warm, impossible, but agreeable tone. This decorative use of a well-worn convention in natural objects is exceedingly interesting. I have claimed for Hals a constant aiming at truth, not only in his faces and his figures, but in his still-life and his accessories. Here, however, we have him accepting with complacency, and embodying in his work, a decorative motive which, by its very nature, at once removes the landscape background from the province of

reality. Hals introduced foliage very rarely in his pictures, and pure landscape even more rarely. When he did employ either the one or the other he broke no fresh ground, and he leaves us no evidence that he saw them except decoratively.

The composition of this picture certainly leaves something to be desired. It is impossible to feel quite satisfied with the ugly lines in which the figure of Hals himself is set athwart the frame. And even after adopting this device to get the whole of himself into the canvas—for it really looks as if this were the cause of it—he has left himself in a curiously uncomfortable pose, which, moreover, seems to throw the figure forward as if about to tumble off its seat.

As a result, perhaps, of this awkward and constrained attitude, the drawing of the figure strikes one as not entirely happy. The bones of the leg do not quite express themselves inside their coverings. A thick, uniform, and monotonous black outline, which runs all down the left side of the man's figure and divides him from his wife's costume, is not, however, due to the hand of Hals, but is an effort of a restorer in the past.

The picture, however, is of the highest interest as a portrait of Hals and his wife. We need say little about the latter except that she is a pleasing-looking, good-tempered body of no great refinement.[1] Naturally it is in the artist himself that our interest will centre. Here we have the man as he saw himself. It is not a face which contradicts, one must fully admit, the character which has been attributed to him. There is nothing intellectual in it, nor is it a face of keen perception and quick sympathy. It has, to say the truth, a something slightly animal about it, and no partisanship could possibly make anyone claim for it any sign of the spiritual. We should, to be sure, have never expected to find that there; but what we should have expected to find, but do not, is a look of greater strength and of greater mental power. The face is wanting in these qualities.

It will be best at this point to look at a portrait by Frans Hals in Devonshire House (*see* Frontispiece), which, though it bears no visible date, is probably about 1624. But we may

[1] She was the mother of eight children: she outlived her husband by some years, ending her days in deep poverty. On July 26th, 1675, she was granted a pension of fourteen sous a week, and we hear no more of her.

Hanfstängl photo.]

13. PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

(*Devonshire House.*)

consider it here most conveniently, not for any reason of date, but because it does, one may almost say undoubtedly, represent Frans Hals himself. The picture has never been exhibited. It has darkened a good deal, especially in the background, but with the varnish removed would probably be found to be in perfect condition. Mr. S. Arthur Strong first observed that the picture was a portrait of the painter, and no one who well knows the Amsterdam portrait will for a moment challenge the conclusion. It is, however, a far finer work than the Amsterdam couple, freer, less constrained, less self-conscious, and withal presenting us with a more powerful and somewhat less animal type than the other. It is, indeed, thrown on to the canvas with all the superb and masterly ease of the man. It is entirely free from that embarrassment which so often marks the portrait of an artist by himself. He seems so totally to have forgotten himself that it is more as if he had seen a face, a pose, a costume, which had seized upon his fancy, and had worked upon it with all his artist nature set on fire by it. And the result is a portrait which, in every sense of the word, is fit to stand as a frontispiece.

There is in the pose of the figure a certain nonchalant ease which stops just short of swagger. It is Hals in his fine clothes, to be sure, but it is a portrait of Hals and not of his clothes; and this is saying very much indeed, for these same clothes, the ruff, the gorgeous brocaded sleeves, the whole *tenue*, are wrought with such matchless ease and power, that a mere painter of properties would certainly have overweighted them with interest, or rather would have underweighted the interest of the face. It is, however, no picture of fine clothes with a head, even a fine head, on the top; but it is a convincing, I had almost said an overwhelming presentment of a real and living personality. The condition is so sound, as is the case with nearly all Frans Hals' works, probably owing to the directness of his technique, that it needs no restoration, even if there were any danger of such a treatment in its present guardianship. When the darkened varnish shall have been removed it will, one feels safe in saying, stand out as one of the most magnificent works which ever came from the hand of Hals.

For the sake of keeping the portraits of Hals together,

we may here speak of one or two others. I pass over the St. Petersburg portrait for reasons explained in the catalogue—it is evidently no portrait of the painter. But the little portrait at Haarlem, painted by Laurensz Van der Vinne, is said in the official catalogue to be a copy of an original by Hals himself, now owned by M. Warneck. It represents Hals as a man of perhaps sixty to seventy. The gay apparel of the Devonshire House portrait has long given way to the shabbier garments of waning prosperity, the air of the gay young gallant to the wrinkles of hard old age. It is a commonplace portrait rather, and its very commonplaceness makes it pathetic. There is a look about the face that tells one that time and himself had not done the best for him.

Of the other traditional portraits I need say little. Those which are said to occur in the Doelen groups rest on no evidence of any worth, and are in two cases quite impossible. The reputed portrait at Gotha is founded on a face. Indeed, there was once a tendency to assign every unnamed portrait which had a prominent and large-bridged nose—quite a common attribute of the old Dutch type of face—and a pointed beard and moustache, to the features of Frans Hals himself. But the three portraits described in this chapter are all that can be accepted as undoubted portraits of the painter, and through them we know the outward fashion of the man.

The Louvre possesses a very desirable pair of portraits of Nicholas Beresteyn and his wife, assigned to 1629. They hang in the very cramped little room in which most of this painter's works appear, to their great disadvantage. For it may be easily proved by experiment that no full-sized portrait by Hals should be hung where you cannot get a clear fourteen feet of interval to view it from—his later work requires more. And it is a misfortune that at Paris and at Berlin, each rich in the work of the painter, the smallness of the side-rooms and the indifference of the lighting compel a nearness of view which his canvases can stand less than almost any man's.

The two Beresteyn portraits (Nos. 16 and 17), when compared with the two of 1620 at Cassel, present no sign of any breaking out into a new style, though they do show a broadening and enlarging of the old style. The handling is, more than ever, strong, decided,

16. NICOLAES BERESTEYN. 1629.

(*Louvre.*)

and direct, yet still with the comparative restraint which he was not to throw off for many a long year yet. This pair of pictures, indeed, has a special interest as leading up to the Beresteyn family group (No. 18) in the same room, in which the same man and woman are seen sitting with their children playing around them.

One's first thought is that the colour is disagreeable and ill-harmonized, and the handling a little dry in parts. The lady wears a stomacher in which the colour is mainly yellow and red. Her dress is a shot silk green (of a most detestable tint) with pink reflections. The little girl scrambling on her mother's knee has a dark blue-green velvet coat, with sleeves and collar of a horrible brickdust red toned with orange. The little child in the nurse's arms, holding a toy bird, has a red plush shot with golden yellow, and the child stooping forward to us has a dress of winesour tint—claret and water—with lightish green reflections. Now all this will not come together, and Hals resorts to the violent expedient of putting the nurse, or waiting-woman, who wears a jacket of the terribly assertive vermilion, such as may be seen in the bodice of a Hardanger peasant, right in the middle of the picture, to reduce all these discordant elements to order by out-shouting them—much as an incompetent teacher will sometimes try to restore order to his class by raising his own voice far above the rest. But the resource in either case is of imperfect result. Possibly it is the only one which was left in such a case; but the colour remains very unsatisfactory. It has been forgiven and over-praised by indulgent critics. One eminent writer, indeed, says of it that the colours are "fresh, bright and lively." So, too, is a free fight in a nursery. But it is also not harmonious, and even disturbing.

Now anyone who has seen the portraits by the painter which in date precede this picture will have quite assured himself that Hals did not of his own choice select discordant colours. Doubtless the tyrannies of family group painting sat not less heavily on the soul of an artist than those of the Doelen groups. The little Beresteyns wore those dresses. It was not to be supposed that Madame Beresteyn was to fit out her little fleet with entirely new Sunday clothes on a soberer scale to suit the whim of the painter. Clearly it was his job to paint them as

they were. So in they have to go, claret and green and blue, vermilion, and yellow—colours dear to the maker of artificial salmon-flies, but not to the man whose eye already had found its rest a good deal lower down the scale. The picture is indeed redeemed entirely by the splendid quality of the individual portraits. Rendered in black and white, when the discordance has vanished from the group, it is no longer open to these adverse criticisms. Nicholas Beresteyn himself, one may notice, has something which at first recalls Rubens; but merely, as calmer inspection will show, because his beard and his dress is of the pattern of Rubens himself, and of so many of his sitters, and not because of any identity of style. A more charming group than that of the nurse, if such she be—or perhaps Madame Beresteyn's sister—who holds the two children, can hardly be imagined. Indeed, all that one can say against these five children (the sixth will be mentioned presently) is that they are painted a little older in face than is consistent with the true realization of childhood.

The picture is only by Hals so far as a point about eight inches behind the ruff of the girl who holds the two children. At that point a strip has been sewn on to the canvas of some two feet in breadth, and extending the whole way up and down the picture. A close examination of this strip will show that the texture of the canvas is closer and finer than the rest. The difference of tone, also, is very apparent in the original, and may even be discerned in a photographic reproduction. A warmer, browner tone has replaced the more vivid greens of the rest of the picture. The handling is uncertain and woolly. The figure of the boy has no resemblance to the touch of Hals. It is evidently the work of an inferior man, who is trying, however, to put in his contribution without glaring contrast to the rest of the picture.

The explanation seems to me to be not difficult. The picture painted by Hals ended at the point indicated. Moreover, if a piece of paper be laid so as to cut the reproduction off at that point, it will at once be seen how greatly it is improved in its grouping, and how much less scattered the composition is, and how much less it seems to "tail off" to the right. Now at that time there were five Beresteyn children. By-and-by came

18. THE BERESTEYN FAMILY.

(*Louvre, Paris.*)

a sixth, and when he was about two to three years old it seemed a pity to the Beresteyn parents that they should not have him in the group. So a commission was given to someone else to put him in. A strip of canvas was added (not from Frans Hals' studio), and Master Beresteyn's portrait duly appears, looking, it must be confessed, not a little *de trop*, and wholly unable to obtain his due share of attention from any of the grown-ups—a quite obvious interpolation, in fact.

A very delightful example of the art of Hals is that portrait of the *Nurse and Child*—the latter said to be of the House of Ilpenstein—in the Gallery at Berlin (No. 21), which he painted in the year 1630. It is true that the restorer or cleaner has not left it to us quite as Hals did. The fact is visible in certain injuries to the surface, and certain faint scumblings in various parts of the picture, but above all in the very strong line of deep madder at the parting of the lips in the nurse, which has been refreshed with singular simplicity of purpose. Also the intervals between the baby's fingers have been renewed with a more feeble touch, and there has been loss of modelling and replacement in the hand holding the apple. Still, taking it altogether, we may be thankful for what is left of a very notable and beautiful instance of Frans Hals.

The child's lace stomacher, cap and collar are made out with a far more exact precision than it is easy to quote in any other picture by the master—once more a very striking instance of the principle already enunciated, whereby the painter seeks to avoid, in a picture where the sign manual should be one of tenderness and weakness, all handling which conveys the suggestion, proper to manhood and virility, of strength or of violence. This piece of lacework is so followed out thread by thread through its pattern that it might be traced and hung up in a technical school as a pattern to the students—a most rare method in Hals' work of dealing with any detail, and assuredly not done without a very deliberately chosen purpose. The child's dress is, with like intention, wrought with great care. And the result is a certain air of primness and primitiveness in the canvas which is charmingly correspondent to the note of the whole picture.

And this child's face should be studied. It is not, granted, the child's face of a Reynolds, or even of a Van Dyck or a Rubens.

Hals is concerned less with the child as child than with the chance it gives him of working out a very difficult, because far more subtle and less tangible, problem of facial expression. If you watch the little face, rather an old little face one feels, you will see it just beginning to ripple all over with the laughter that will come in a minute; and as you stand before it you come to wonder why the little creature which is just on the edge of laughter takes so long to burst into it. One thinks as one looks at it that Hals perhaps learnt this knack as he watched his own children in his own home before the dark days had fallen upon it.

Two very fine portraits (Nos. 23 and 24), which hang at Haarlem, are passed over with brief remark, not because they are not worth longer notice—few of the painter's works rank higher—but because they do not represent any special type which we have not already touched. The catalogue of the collection in 1901 gives these portraits under the names of Nicolas Van der Meer, burgomaster of Haarlem, and his wife Cornelia Voogt. But the two are described by some writers—and in Knackfuss's monograph on Frans Hals are reproduced—under the names of Albert Van Nierop, Doctor of Laws and Member of the High Court of Justice, with his wife Cornelia Van der Meer. For the sake of consistency I follow the verdict of the official catalogues[1] throughout this book, and the portraits are reproduced (Nos. 23 and 24) under the first-mentioned pair of names. Burgomaster or Doctor of Laws, Voogt, Van der Meer, or Nierop, it matters little. The man is a masterpiece of character-reading, and a masterpiece of painting; and the woman hardly less so in either sort.

[1] The arms in the woman's portrait are the same as in the portrait of Maria Voogt (1639) at Amsterdam (Chapter XIV.).

Hanfstängl photo.]

21. NURSE AND CHILD, 1630.

(*Museum, Berlin.*)

Hanfstängl photo.]

23. ALBERT VAN DER MEER, 1631.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

Hanfstängl photo.]

23. ALBERT VAN DER MEER, 1631.

(*Rathaus, Haarlem.*)

CHAPTER XIII

CHARACTER PORTRAITS OF ALL PERIODS

THE JESTER (OF AMSTERDAM)—*THE GIPSY* (OF THE LOUVRE)—*THE SANDLOOPER* (OF ANTWERP)—VARIOUS TOPERS—SINGING BOYS, *HILLE BOBBE*, ETC.

I HAVE already expressed the opinion, which, I believe, must inevitably result to anyone who has viewed the life of Frans Hals as a consistent whole, and realized the one aim of his chief artistic purpose, which presently absorbed all others, that we must regard him even in his so-called genre pictures always as a portrait-painter, always as one whose prevailing thought was the vivid presentment of a face at a given moment under a transient expression. And in this respect, though his brilliant realizations of commonplace and sometimes vulgar facial expression did undoubtedly give the start to those many Dutch painters who lived after him, and are sometimes called by the clumsy title "the genre painters," yet he differs entirely from them in this, that he is always first and foremost portrait-painter, never a subject-painter who merely uses a model. As I have already pointed out, these "genre pictures" (I wish I could avoid the title) of jesters, gipsies, mountebanks, topers, go *pari passu* all along his career with his graver portraits. They were necessary to him because, as I have already said, no man pays for his portrait to be painted while he grins at a half-empty pot, or leers up at a half-open casement. If Hals was to paint these subjects, which had the greatest attraction for him because they gave him his chances of rendering the human face in action, he must pay them, or reward them in some shape, or attract them by his talk and his jokes in studio or pothouse to act as his models.

This is the real distinction between the one class of portrait and the other. His aim, however, was the same in both—absolute realization of a likeness.

It is in this class of so-called genre pictures, which tempted imitators great and small, that the greatest wrong has been done to Hals, and that the greatest number of works under false attributions hang in many galleries. One or two recognized copies, indeed, are of value where the originals are inaccessible or lost. But the tendency to label all persons who gesticulate over pewter pots, or who play musical instruments with the suitable contortions, though it is natural on the part of the owners of pictures and of the directors of museums, has greatly injured the reputation of Hals. Nor can it be said that picture-dealers as a body have put any great strain upon themselves in the endeavour to oppose this tendency.

That Hals was, in his later days, an unequal painter, is a position which it is difficult to contest with entire success. But that position has been made to seem far stronger than it is by the large quantity of inferior works which have been accepted as his merely because their subjects are such as he painted and the style a colourable imitation of his. It is often quite easy to say that these works are none of his. It is generally very difficult or quite impossible to say from whom else they proceed. But it may be admitted that Hals would indeed be an unequal painter, if he had painted the masterpieces which really do belong to him and the fatuities which are sometimes labelled with his name.

In the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam hangs an admirable old copy, said to be by Dirk Hals, of an original in the possession of Baron Gustav Rothschild. This is the *Jester*, *Fool*, *Mandolin Player*, *Lute Player*—he appears under different names. The copy has every appearance of being faithful, the only visible shortcoming being in the left hand, which is heavy and overloaded and has gone wrong. It is unsafe to criticise colour from a copy, no matter how excellent—and it is best, therefore, to forbear. But the rendering of facial expression by the copyist may here be fully trusted, and, moreover, may be understood quite fully by an appeal to the reproduction (No. 19). It is interesting to mention that an old tradition has it that this is a portrait of the artist's pupil, Adriaen Brouwer. But, who-

19. THE FOOL, 1630.

(*A copy: Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.*)

ever be the original, it is quite impossible to stand before the picture without feeling assured that it is a portrait to the life of someone. Perhaps in the whole range of art there is nothing more convincingly lifelike. It is nothing to the point for us to inquire, was this thing worth the doing? was there no finer subject on which to expend this astounding force? It is nothing to the point to say that the motive is trivial, and that the fellow and his chansons were probably vulgar. That is apt to be the way of the jester and of the strolling musician, no doubt, whether he is met with at Haarlem or at Henley. We need not be at pains to claim that the *Fool* of Frans Hals, or the *Buffoon* of Velazquez, or the *Pierrots* of Watteau, are exalted subjects. We have to be content with the art that has raised even these into the region of classics. It is only necessary to think what these subjects may and have become in the hands of the trivial, to make one look at this impudent, rascally *Jester* of Frans Hals with something of the respect, though of a different calibre, that we feel for a Touchstone or a Launcelot Gobbo. Each is a masterpiece of his kind. And each becomes a living being unforgetable when once you have made his acquaintance. There lies the test of the artist's power as a creator.

No less intimate and unerring is his seizure of the expression, not quite so momentary and far more pleasing, in his magically brilliant sketch of a gipsy, *La Bohémienne*, in the Louvre—a model possibly caught at some strolling show at Haarlem. I call it a sketch advisedly. The artist who examines it closely—and it is for artists, above all others, a morsel which they cannot afford to pass by—will assert with me that the fact is written on every inch. It is thinly and lightly, but firmly painted, with a very full and very liquid brush—almost like a very fluid but solid water-colour, if such a thing could be—each tone brought up to the other and overlapping; but set there once, and once for all, with absolute knowledge and certainty, no afterthoughts, no changes, no happy accidents. It is all seen unerringly, touched unerringly. So she was, for that hour or two, so she was painted for that hour or two, and so she was left. And it has all that delicious freshness and charm which belong to a first sketch before nature of a great artist, and

belong to that alone. But the sketches of most men, even the greatest, for all their freshness and deliciousness, are tentative, experimental, demanding concession and even forgiveness on the part of the sympathizer as compared with this sketch by Hals. There is nothing, in the way of technique or from the point of view of the artist, to forgive or to have to understand. It is at once a fresh, first-thought sketch, and a complete and finished picture—if indeed the true definition of finish in a picture is the moment beyond which every added touch is a loss.

Whether this picture appeals to all picture-lovers in the same degree as it will appeal to every artist who examines it *is* another question. I have known some to whom it certainly does not appeal. On this point I would merely state it as a matter of my own experience, that it is with this picture, as with so many of Hals': the longer you sit before it, the more do you see in it, the more do you become fascinated by it. A superficial view of any of Hals' pictures reveals to you, I have always found, only the parts that you do not like—the parts which occasionally come near to repelling you. No man that I know of needs so much time. Given that time, no man that I know of so completely repays it. He is not a man who, on the surface, is exactly loveable, and yet I have rarely gone away from one of his subjects, which I may have at first disliked, without a strong feeling of sympathy for this much misunderstood man.

In this portrait of the poor gipsy girl, handsome, happy-go-lucky, good-natured hussy that she is, I find once more in Hals a sympathy for his subject which goes far beyond the mere painter's desire, of which he is so often accused, to paint on to a canvas in imitation of a human face, and to show how brilliantly he can do it. She is slatternly, careless and free, and Hals gives you all that. But he tells you a little more about the merry-looking creature than that, and what he tells you makes you sympathize. She is greatly amused—thinks, indeed, that it is the best joke that has happened to her for a long time—that she should have her portrait painted. The smile on her face is quite irrepressible—at any moment it will burst into a laugh, and it is so full of naturalness that you know you will have to laugh with her whenever she does. It is more catching than,

20. LA BOHÉMIENNE. 1630.

(*Louvre, Paris.*)

though of course not so subtle as, the unfathomable smile with which Lisa la Gioconda looks out at you from the canvas of Lionardo. The one, indeed, is the smile of sheer good temper and animal spirits, and it calls out in you something of the same sort of feeling; the other is the expression of some set of thoughts deep within which makes you, too, look inwards and smile, you don't know why: and there is magic in either; and yet how different are the means which produced the one, and the means which produced the other: as different indeed as the men themselves, as Hals and Lionardo; as different as La Bohémienne herself and Lisa la Gioconda. At Antwerp we find Hals again in sympathy with another phase of life in his rendering of the fisher-boy, known as *The Sandlooper*. Here I would notice that the picture has naturally not been free from suspicion, for it is quite evident that the background, somewhat elaborately painted sanddunes along the sea, is not from the hand of Hals, but has been added later by one of the Dutch landscape men.[1] But the figure I think is certainly his, and it is an extremely rapid masterful bit of handling, in which what is an absolutely incoherent mass of meaningless strokes and slashes when seen close by, becomes at twelve or fourteen feet distant a ragged fisher-boy's coat completely explained. Probably Hals sketched this boy at a full-speed sitting some day down at Katwyk or Zandvoort, and left the head and figure alone on the canvas, some later painter being called in to complete the work, which he did without considering that his own small style of exact landscape would be out of place in a picture that needed to be viewed from some fourteen feet away. The picture is hardly one of his best on any showing, but it is worth pausing at, because, apart from the vigour and summarized knowledge of its handling, it reveals a certain sympathy with the lot of the peasant which is too often absent from Dutch painters as a whole, who generally

[1] Since the above was written I have found in A. Van der Willigen, "Les Artistes de Harlem," 1870, p. 348, the following entry: "In the catalogue of the pictures of Jacob Odin, Amsterdam, Sept. 6th, 1784 (presumably a sale), figured a fisher by Frans Hals. His face is seen three-quarters view: he carries a basket on his back. The distance represents a view in the dunes, covered with bushes, cleverly painted by Jacob Ruysdael, height 13, breadth 10½ pouces." This seems to be the Antwerp picture, and, if so, the opinion expressed in the text is fully confirmed.

seemed to sympathize with them, because some of them boozed conveniently in alehouses where pots and pans and other picturesque belongings abounded. Here in the sunburnt, rather earnest, stupid face of the open-mouthed lad, in the eyes bloodshot with wind and sand, one has the rudiments of that sympathetic insight into the life itself of the peasant which was, however, not destined, in that century, to go much further either with Hals or his followers. There is a certain rude pathos in the picture which reminds one that there was in Dutch peasant life a healthier, worthier, and more pathetic side than Brouwer, Ostade, or Jan Steen had it in them to see.

And between this and the *Hille Bobbe* of Berlin, 1650 (No. 46), there lie a number of "merry topers" and charlatans, notably the mountebank of Cassel, and "playing boys," which, in varying degrees, exhibit the dexterity of the man. It has already been said, and will have to be repeated more in detail in a later chapter, that after 1641 Hals more and more abandoned the use of positive colour, and as he did so more and more fell into the use of grayish, dusky, and finally black shadows. The well-known *Hille Bobbe* is at once an example of the astonishing dexterity which he had attained—and not lost at the age of seventy—of setting down a passing expression, and also an example of the extreme to which he had allowed himself to go in the use of black upon flesh colour.

Hille Bobbe was a fishwife of Haarlem, and it would seem —I confess that my historical researches into her personality are extremely superficial—a noted character in her day. Something in the look of the old hag one day seems to have tickled Frans Hals, and he sets her down with ruthless reality there and then in a sketch so rapid and so summary that one may, by the sabre-like black slashes on the background at the side of her head, tell the very size of the brushes which he used (he seems to have used tools of a medium size, not the very largest, as we might have expected). Colours are scarce and precious to poor Frans at that date; he has few at hand. Black and white and yellow ochre and blue and red, nothing more, and one wishes he had left out all but the black and white, and given it us without any colour but what we could have suggested to ourselves. Then these absolutely black shadows on the flesh, even on the very

Hanfstangl photo.]

46. HILLE BOBBE, 1650.

(*Museum, Berlin.*)

old and bloodless flesh of the poor old fishfag, would have stood in no need of forgiveness. But as a piece of slashing, instantaneous execution, a superb snapshot with brushes and colour, nothing can go far beyond it. It is done—you may see it in every single brushmark—at lightning speed. "Careless, hasty, reckless work," it, and other of Hals' work of the date, has been called. Nothing of the kind. It is careful—the care of extreme, though habitual, tension and breathless concentration—the sort of care which a first-rate game-shot uses, and which seems like a kind of jugglery to the looker-on. It is fully considered, each almost shapeless touch. It is calculated, every splash of it, and never hasty or reckless, though always at full speed. The best—and Hals' best was good—he could do in the time; and the time was, one's instinct tells one, limited by Hille Bobbe's patience; and that, one's instinct says again, was in its turn limited by the depth of the pewter of schnapps which she holds in her withered old hand.

Once more perhaps that question: And was it worth the doing?—a question which once more I take leave not to discuss. Once more I would remind the reader of the interpretation which throughout these pages I have set upon the aim of Frans Hals—that he was a portrait-painter first and foremost, and one in whom at the last almost every other aim of the painter had given way to the one absorbing aim of drawing and setting down the elusive, momentary changes of the features. As a portrait-painter of this specific character he is fascinated over and over again by what, but for this singleness of aim, should have perhaps repulsed him, and would have repulsed many another. He has, in this single absorption, lost both the sense of beauty to some extent, and the sense of ugliness. He who in his day has painted the Lady of Cassel, the Olycans of the Hague, the Van der Meers of Amsterdam, and the little child of Berlin, can paint now this witch-like cackling old fishfag without shrinking from her hideousness or even seeming to feel it.

However much we may lament that Hals allowed so many of his artistic senses to become atrophied as he advanced in life, we must at least allow to him a rare singleness of purpose in the development of that one sense which above all others he valued, the sense of direct seeing and of unflinching expression

of what he saw. He did at least look his soul, such as it was, in the face all along his life, and the one he had was at least his own and never someone else's at second hand. Poor Hals certainly followed his star, whithersoever it should lead. It led him, indeed, to poverty, for the evidence is plain enough that the art of Hals was never really popular, and that by 1645 he had ceased to be fashionable, and that by 1650 he was out in the cold.

Hals was indeed no great thinker, and no moralist. He was not a man with a mission—probably did not recognize the existence of such a thing in art. But one may claim for him, as one has claimed before, that he painted up to the very end as his artist instinct showed him, and, above all, that he did not step aside, even when the fuel was lowest in the house of Hals and the pot most needed boiling, to any of those unseemlinesses which were more and more the fashion of Dutch Art.

And against Hals the crime can hardly be charged with much force if, being a portrait-painter, he left untouched that great field of worthy peasant life which modern men have seen into. The crime sits heavier against those of the Dutch School who immediately followed him, and who, making subject and domestic subject their motive, yet failed—with a few exceptions, such as Nicolaes Maes and Pieter de Hooghe, and even those did not look very deep—to see the worthier side of the Dutch peasant's home life. There is at this day no finer and more upright peasantry in Europe, both physically and socially, than the Dutch. They may lack some of the more loveable and winning qualities which other peasantries possess, but in the qualities of self-respect and decency of home life there are none who can be put before them. And there is no reason whatever to suppose that they were otherwise in the days of the Dutch painters. Personally I find it impossible to believe that the besotted, misshapen clowns of Teniers and Ostade, or the boozing loafers and sluts of Jan Steen, were typical of the true peasantry of their day. It was to be left to the men of a later day, to Millet, to Israels, to Mauve, in this country and that, to show that there was a side to the life which, without separation from the picturesqueness of the surroundings, and without losing any of the opportunities which they loved, would have

offered the Dutchmen a worthier and more moving field than that which they chose to occupy. But to the great portrait-painter, in his search for fantastic variation of facial expression, such a view, from the very nature of the case, lay outside the range of his art.

CHAPTER XIV

MARIA VOOGT,[1] 1639, IN THE RIJKS MUSEUM, AMSTERDAM

IT is the custom in many picture galleries to place a recognized masterpiece in a chamber by itself. The example may be followed with some fitness in the case of a picture which, as a single portrait, is the masterpiece of Frans Hals.

In dealing with the 1641 Regenten picture at Haarlem (No. 43), we have already mentioned the generally accepted view that during a certain period of his career, which is roughly included between the years 1635 and 1643, Hals was visibly influenced by Rembrandt. This influence, it is claimed, is to be seen in several works painted within that period—notably this portrait (1639), the head of an old Lady in the Bridgewater Collection (1640), and the aforesaid Regents of St. Elizabeth's Poorhouse, and two companion portraits at Frankfort. I cannot speak positively to any others which have been directly quoted in evidence of the theory that Hals painted for a time under the influence of Rembrandt.

It is a bold thing to contest a view which has been supported by such weighty critics as Dr. Bode and others of scarcely less authority, and the reader will assuredly not be ready to take my single opinion against such a formidable opposition without putting it, through his own eyes, to as severe a test as I have done myself. But I am compelled to say, at the risk of repeating myself, that in spite of vague and undefined connection of thought which, while you are looking at the one man, often sets you thinking about the other, I am

[1] Also called Madame Van der Meer.

Hanfstängl photo.]

40. MARIA VOOGT, OR VAN DER MEER, 1639.

(*Rijks Museum, Amsteraam.*)

unable to find evidence which does not give way under careful analysis. The comparatively warmer tone which, during some years of his practice, came over the daylight of Hals, may indeed be due to some inspiration from the warmer master, but it is surely not pronounced enough—save in one very important exception (see note on the Bridgewater portrait, at the end of the chapter), which if it be conceded perhaps covers the whole question—to need to be accounted for by such an explanation. I have in another chapter endeavoured to show that it can be accounted for by the ordinary development of Frans Hals' colour vision. It amounts at most, however (save in that one case), to an increase in the warmth of his tones, and to a more suffused rendering of his shades—to be explained, I venture to think, by the growth of his sense of atmosphere. Direct comparison, at close quarters, with any work of Rembrandt is apt to dispel the belief in the connection, which, when we view them apart and at a distance, is certainly apt to assert itself.

And before we look at the Van der Hoop portrait, it will be also of use, in connection with the supposed influence of Rembrandt, to point out the great amount of negative evidence which exists in the shape of portraits and groups painted within the same period, which cannot possibly be considered to bear traces of Rembrandt's influence—for example, the St. Joris Doelen group of 1639. This group shows, as we saw in Chapter VII., a much enlarged view of atmosphere, and of the action of light and shade in subduing colours and bringing it all together. But this broader way of seeing came not from Rembrandt to Hals, but from Hals to Hals. At the age of fifty-nine his eyes had shown him a different vision from that which he saw through them at the age of thirty-six. But it would be difficult for anyone to see any serious trace of Rembrandt, or indeed of anyone but the man himself, in that great picture. So, too, in the Regnier Reaels company group of 1637, partly done by Hals, there is no trace, in his portion of it, of any such influence. Similarly one may go through the other pictures by Hals done between 1635 and 1645 with the same negative result.

When we come to the superb portrait of Maria Voogt, who is also sometimes called Madame Van der Meer, in the Van der

Hoop Collection in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam, we are, it is true, set thinking of Rembrandt. It is exactly the same type of old Dutch lady which Rembrandt loved to paint. She wears the same costume, naturally enough, as Rembrandt's old ladies in the same station of life, and she sits in the same simple and quiet pose. But these are traits common to both men, which neither has derived from the other. It is warmer in its shadows and its half-tones, and has more gold in its lights than is usual with Hals. Perhaps it has. But walk two rooms off and look at Rembrandt's portrait of Elizabeth Jacobs Bas, the widow of Admiral Swartenhont. You will see at once that Hals' picture is in cool daylight compared with the artificial golden light with which Rembrandt's picture is suffused. If the two pictures could be hung side by side, what one would at once notice would be that all the apparent similarity had vanished, and the points of difference seemed multiplied. The experiment would, in one way, be eminently unfair to Hals. The golden light of the Rembrandt would make the quiet and true, I must claim to be allowed to say truer, though less fascinating daylight of Hals look very cold indeed. He would suffer misjudgement at the hands of all save the most cool-headed and judicial of critics.

But one can find no single point which helps to make a great portrait, in which Hals need, in this Maria Voogt or Madame Van der Meer, fear comparison either with that masterpiece of Rembrandt's or, to set the claim plainly, with any portrait that ever has been painted. That is, of course, not the same thing as saying that it is as delightful as some portraits that have been painted, and yet it is very enjoyable.

The face is a quiet, shrewd, penetrating face, with more refinement than most Dutch women of the day possessed. She was built in a less masterful mould of mind and body, for instance, than the kindly, solid, hard-bitten admiral's wife. Hals has given one here the inner life of his sitter—that which at times one is tempted to declare he cannot give: and that inner life, one may safely say, one which was hardly akin to his own. That brown, Dutch-bound, silver-clasped Bible there has got itself well into the life of the clear-eyed old dame. It is no hypocrisy—you may swear it from her face—that made her choose to be painted so.

As we have said, she is cast in a less stern and also in a less sturdy mould than the grand old Dutchwoman whom Rembrandt painted. She did less of the house-work with her own hands—look at them and see—than Dame Elizabeth Bas. As one looks at the admiral's wife, one feels the conviction that, whatever happened at sea, it was she who commanded the ship at home. There is strength in every line of the shrewd, homely face, and in the quiet ease of the strong hands which lie folded upon one another. The hands of Hals' portrait are fully as expressive of character, but the character is different. There is quiet, firm decision in them, but they do not belong to a personality of the same rugged and robust strength as the other housewife. Yet I take it that she knew her own mind as well in her quiet decided way, and that there was little that was contrary to sound order in the Haarlem home of the Van der Meers.

As a piece of insight into character this picture by Hals stands in the very highest order of portrait-painting. As a piece of mere painting, apart from any such consideration, it may be set side by side with any portrait from any hand and will be found to have no superior. We have disclaimed, on behalf of Hals, any attempt to paint in the manner of Rembrandt, or to follow his influence; but it may, on the other hand, very well be the case that the growing fame of the younger man had set him on his mettle and that he felt himself, about this period, answering a challenge. And in this portrait he has answered it "so that the opposer may beware of him." Always in my experience, and I have sat many hours at different times before both pictures, you will find a dozen persons who are attracted by Rembrandt's Elizabeth Bas, and who will sit before it, as it deserves to be sat before, for a considerable time, as against one who gives even a short five minutes to the colder, less overmastering, but quite as masterly, and even more true, portrait of Dame Van der Meer.

The face is painted with the simple directness which always marks him. Very noticeable, indeed, is the manner in which he has dealt with the shadow at the side of the forehead. It is laid on in flat mass—almost blocked in, after the practice followed in laying in in modern French studio work—and it is joined to the higher flesh tones apparently by no subtle modulations or passages of half-tone, as Velazquez would have done it, nor yet

is it blurred and softened, as Rembrandt would have given it, but it seems at first sight almost to have a straight edge to it, so firm, definite, and decided is it. And yet there is here given to us by this simple and direct means all the transparency and the modelling of the concave shadow at the side of the forehead. The same direct simplicity and oneness of handling are visible everywhere in the face. He has seen it all once for all and set it down once for all, the modelling being everywhere obtained by overlappings of colour laid on somewhat liquid in masses. I do not mean by this to imply, as it might be construed, that Hals' surface is painty. It is so far otherwise that the thing seems to have come of itself, and the manner of its doing does not enforce itself upon you. When you compel yourself to try to find out how it is all achieved, you discover the absolute simplicity of the means employed. The magic of the thing lay in the "knowing how."

I have already spoken of the painting of the hands from the point of view of the rendering of character. It is interesting to regard them also from the point of view of mere technique. It will be doubly interesting to compare them with Rembrandt's hands in the *Elizabeth Bas* close by. How absolutely different the means by which the two men obtain their results, and how absolutely right each man is in his own method! Hals gets his hands, in all his portraits, by direct sweeps of the brush, full of very liquid colour, following down the lines of the bones, and obtaining the articulations of the joints with almost imperceptible changes of colour in the onward passage. There is very little loading of paint or dragging across the lines of the anatomy, except here and there to give the modelling of the back of the hand or of the muscle between the first finger and the thumb. It is interesting, by the way, to notice an often employed device of Hals, by which he makes the round parts of the hand, seen against a dress, go round, as it were, instead of presenting a solid flat edge against the dark. It will be found that he draws a film of very thin colour beyond the edge of the hand in places, through which the colour of the dress or other background shines. Now seen close, this sort of film, or blurred second outline, seems to have no meaning or to be even the result of careless haste. The restorer usually removes it, one

may observe, as his first duty to his author; but retire a pace or two and you find that you have got, in mysterious fashion, the sense of the soft flesh going round, as it does in nature, towards the dress. And all this apparently shapeless and incoherent set of sweeps and patches becomes, at the proper distance, a living human hand, and moreover the living human hand of the person to whom it belongs, and as full of character as the face itself.

Now go to a Rembrandt hand and you will find it as full of character and wrought with the same magician's power and knowledge as a hand by Hals; but the result is got by a wholly different technique. Rembrandt loads his colour on with a heavy impasto, into which he can even dig his brush—it is sometimes almost like a piece of modelling rather than paint—and he drags his colour athwart the lines of the fingers and of the bones, and rarely in a following line with them. This too, seen close—smelt, as Rembrandt himself would have said—is a shapeless patch of blurs and blotches. It is a living expressive human hand only when you go to the distance at which the painter meant it to be seen.

I have already spoken of the consummate skill with which in the Van der Meer portrait Hals has painted the book, and indeed every accessory of this masterpiece. That book, indeed, is so matchless a piece of still-life painting, that it would be open to the charge of being too interesting in itself, and too little of an accessory, if it were not kept entirely in its place by the interest of the face itself. One does not turn to think of such a detail till one has taken in the true purpose of the picture first. When one does so, it is to become aware once more that Hals has answered the challenge that any still-life painter of them all might issue.

Indeed, if Hals were called upon to choose one single work of his wherewith to take his stand against all comers, he might well select his portrait of the lady of the house of Van der Meer, which he painted in 1639, at the age of fifty-nine—the halfway date, as we have consented to consider it, in his artistic career.

Note on the Bridgewater Portrait

The picture in the Bridgewater Gallery is so important a contribution to the question of Rembrandt's influence upon Hals, that it has seemed best to treat it here in immediate contact with the argument of the last chapter; for it must be quite frankly admitted that, if it be beyond dispute the work of Hals, then it is a piece of evidence which cannot be got over, and which would prove not only that Hals had, indeed, at one time of his career, been influenced by Rembrandt, but that he had, in this instance at least, carried his admiration quite consciously to the length of actual imitation.

The picture, a fine one, is of no great size (about two feet square), the head of an elderly, brown-eyed, healthy-faced woman in a close white cap and large ruff, worn over a dark dress. There is no positive colour in the canvas, but over the whole is the softened but restrained glow with which we are familiar in the early works of Rembrandt, before he had gone to his full length of golden colour. The background is of the warm gray-brown which the younger painter employed, and the golden tones which run throughout the whites of Rembrandt is here in the ruff, not the brilliant pure white of Hals himself. And, above all, the flesh tones are fresher and more of the ripe nectarine texture than one associates with the flesh tones of Hals. Not only this, but the handling of the face is a departure from the usual manner of Hals. There is loading and impasto, and a little dragging in the lights of the forehead and of the cheek.

Indeed, it would be quite as easy to accept this for an early Rembrandt, with some approach to Hals, if it were so labelled, as to accept it for a Hals painted under the influence of Rembrandt.

It is, by the way, interesting to observe that there are authorities, and notably in Holland itself, who see in Rembrandt's work traces of the influence of the older painter. I merely state this opinion here without endorsing it.

The pedigree of this picture before it came to England is unknown to me; but if it is beyond dispute, then I can see no

escape from the admission that we have here Hals experimenting in the style of Rembrandt, and carrying his experiment to the length of scarcely disguised imitation of the younger painter. It is, indeed, much to have to concede on the evidence of one work alone, especially as I cannot convince myself of the necessity of seeing it either in the Regenten (1641) picture, the Van der Meer portrait (1639), or the two portraits of Frankfort (whose testimony, however, has been rendered nugatory by restorations, and cannot now be called with good effect on either side).

I have seen no convenient way of giving to this Bridgewater portrait its proper place, except by inserting it as a full value note—which is, indeed, precisely what the picture itself must have stood as—if it be really of Hals' hand, in relation to his work; standing alone, and to be read apart from the true sequence of his development.

CHAPTER XV

THE LATER PORTRAITS

THAT Frans Hals, after the year 1641, began to fall into a habit of using dusky and sooty shadows, both for his flesh tones and for his details, has already been several times set forth. A careful following of all his works painted after that date will show that the habit increased upon him, until he was ready, in some of his works, to use positive black. Very gladly would I spare both myself and the reader the task of analyzing any more portraits, if it were possible to do so without a serious sin of omission. But the period—comprising the last twenty-five years of the painter's career—is of the greatest importance, including as it does works which, while they show him to us at times in his least pleasing phase, also display him at the height of his unrivalled dexterity. It was during this last dark period of his that his most astounding feats of rapid handling were performed. For the wonder of his technique seemed to increase in proportion as he freed himself from the problems of colour, and indeed of many another problem which was left on one side in pursuit of his single aim. Gradually he had laid aside all use of positive hues, and by 1645 he had almost ceased to think in colour at all.

It was in that year that he painted a picture, now to be seen in the gallery at Brussels, which is for the blackness of its shadows an extreme though typical instance. This is the portrait of one Jan Hornebeek of Utrecht,[1] a professor ("Hooglaerer") of Leyden, a man of most unpleasing and sensual face. He was of very black complexion, and, being shaven after the fashion of professors in that day and place, the black-

[1] Painted at Utrecht in 1645, during a visit paid by Hals to that city. See F. W. Moes, "Frans Hals," Haarlem, 1896.

44. PROFESSOR JAN HORNEBEEK, 1645.

(*Brussels Gallery.*)

45. PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. (LA FEMME AU GANT.)

(*Louvre, Paris.*)

47. RENÉ DESCARTES. 1655.

(*Louvre, Paris.*)

Hanfstängl photo.

48. TYMAN OOSDORP, 1656.

(*Museum, Berlin.*)

ness of the flesh tones is doubtless proper to the original. But Hals goes at his task with a preconceived intention of blackness. The inky shadows beside the hair, at the throat, at the wrists, and even between the fingers, all add to the unpleasant impression of what must have been a singularly uncaptivating personality. But the reality of the picture is unmistakeable, and the ferocious veracity with which everything is set down—one gets the idea from it that Hals was by no means in love with the sanctimonious-looking sensual sitter—makes this disagreeable piece of painting a real *tour de force*. It is Hals at his full force, one might almost say at his full violence.

Remembering the rule that, relatively to his men sitters at any period, his women are painted with reserve and restraint, one is not surprised that in an elderly woman's portrait in the Louvre, painted in 1650 (No. 45), he is, in spite of the blackness of his shadows and the duskiness of his flesh tints, nearer to his earlier self once more. The portrait hangs (1901) in the same room as *La Bohémienne*, and the pair make together an interesting object-lesson in the style of the man. This portrait under consideration is of a woman not of the higher class—probably a servant of some sort, to judge by the dress and, above all, by the hard horny fingers of the hands. The character is as simply and finely seen and realized as ever, and the picture is full of masterly but restrained power. You do not have to forgive this portrait for the sake of its fine technique. It makes no such demand upon you.

In the same year, 1650, as this comparatively sedate portrait of a Dutch housekeeper came, it will be remembered, the *Hille Bobbe* (No. 46) of Berlin, in which Hals lets himself loose with all the ferocity which quite legitimately belongs to the subject. A comparison of these two subjects will once more emphasize the fact that he did vary his treatment with the character; and even the sex—for *Hille Bobbe* was not of the womanly order—of his sitters.

From this date to the end, the pictures by Hals are sadly few in number—*Tyman Oosdorp* at Berlin (1655), *René Descartes* in the Louvre (1656), two or three men's portraits in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, and a few others, complete the tale. These all, in varying degrees, present the same

features, the same unhesitating, slashing rapidity of technique with the same disregard for subtleties of flesh colour, though not for its modelling and its relative tones. As you go to one of these portraits you receive always the same warning to keep your distance—fourteen feet at least. The wild chaos of zigzags and transverse strokes of the hogs' brush admit of no close inspection except for purpose of analysis. Most visitors to galleries, however, as I have observed, content themselves by coasting round the pictures at a distance of about five feet, and these, not unnaturally, find but little edification in the later works of Hals. But go back to where he meant you to see them from —it is very easy to determine that—and this wild confusion settles down into the most convincing reality, not only of character, but also of mere texture, velvet, or silk or satin, linen or cambric or lace. You still find yourself complaining, perhaps, that you do not like his black shadows or his bloodless flesh tones. Hals replies to you from his picture that he doesn't mind whether you enjoy them or not. He was not thinking of your enjoyment or of anyone else's; for Hals, wilful from the beginning, was still as much of his own mind now, when the evil days were on him and there was no fuel in the store. He paints to himself, and he will paint so to the last. The smaller, more elaborate, brilliantly finished technicians of the Dutch school—the Ostades, the Steens, the De Hooghes, etc., the men who see in small—hold the stage now while he starves. But he still sees in big, and he will paint, too, in big, and in black too, whether he starves or not for it.

And I know no picture before which the feeling almost of resentment comes to one so much as when one first stands in the little room at Cassel before the *Young Man in the Flap Hat* (Schlapphut) (No. 49), which Hals painted in 1660, when he was eighty years old. Probably one has taken one's stand in the middle of the room, a little too near, and the astonishing medley of shapeless and incoherent gashes and chevrons rises up under one's offended eyes. It is all shapeless at first sight and without drawing, or even out of drawing, set carelessly across its frame, and it seems to be tumbling all to pieces as you look at it. You are angry with Hals. You have defended him often, but this is a little too much. He is trying too great an experi-

Hanfstängl, photo. Cassel Gallery.

Young man in a flap-hat, 1660.

ment on your patience. Does he seriously ask you to take all that mess for a painting? A child with a tar brush would do it like that. The thing is unworthy even of a great man's far old age, one says.

If you are as most people—I have noticed—after a contemptuous glance up at the picture and down at the Baedeker, you walk out of the room. If you are a believer in Hals, however hurt you feel, it presently possesses you that you are perhaps treating him badly rather than he you. You fall back to the needful distance near the other wall, and you have before you a wonderful picture—an old man's work still, one sees that plainly enough—but a work possible only to a mighty artist, and such as none else could have put so upon a canvas.

There is no positive colour again anywhere. Some dull red-brown, and some dull yellow on the chair-rail and back. He had, as usual, on his palette that day his black and his white, yellow ochre and a blue—there is some low-toned blue in the sky at the back—and light red. The workhouse allowance did not run to lakes and carmines, even if he had wanted them, and he is quite content to work his lips in a bricky red. The pigment in this picture is not used liquid, as it used to be, but somewhat thicker and drier, and the modelling is got by laying on rather square flat blocks of colour, which are not worked together over the edges, but lie side by side like modern French studio work in its early stage. The hands are swept in with great strokes of red and yellow and black.

The young man—he becomes a good deal older in a reproduction—is light of hair and gray of eye, and the merry, good-tempered expression of his face gets hold of you and stays with you when once you have taken time and trouble enough to make his acquaintance. Your feeling of resentment has entirely passed away, and you go back again and again captivated in some mysterious way, not by the beauty of the thing, for beauty is the wrong word to apply to any late work of Hals, but rather by the magic of the seeing and the rendering.

And the drawing, of which one had been so mistrustful at first, has now resolved itself into a no less marvellous feat of expression. Of strict, definite drawing, in the academic sense, there is none. But there is the suggestion, the shadowing forth

of it all which would be impossible to any man who had not long ago had at his brushes' end all there was to know of drawing. He suggests to you, he hints to you, he indicates to you. You may take up his suggestion, or you may leave it. But there it is for you, and by its aid you see what he has drawn through what he has not drawn. The young man sits across the chair, his right arm on its back—Hals tells you that with his painting; his left arm, invisible, is resting on his left hip—he tells you that by suggestion. His left leg is drawn back farther than his right, which is evidently projected forward to prevent the chair from collapsing. Not one of these things is expressly stated, the limbs being all, save the right arm, out of the picture. The longer you look the more do you feel that he has told you everything, where he seemed to have told you nothing. The same result will follow, though of necessity in a far less degree, upon an unhurried study of the reproduction.

The last stage has now been reached. There is a gap of four years, and then the two Regenten pictures of the *Guardians of the Poor House* (Nos. 50 and 51), which we have had to take note of in an earlier chapter, and then the grave in the choir of St. Bavon.

CHAPTER XVI

UPGATHERINGS

THERE are many points of interest which one observes in a systematic study of any master which one does not step aside to notice in the course of a description or a discussion, because to do so interrupts the reader, and takes the attention off the leading issues. Yet they are perhaps worth recording in the form of disconnected jottings, because they offer slight aids now and then to the judgement in deciding the question of a true Hals. The reader will therefore fully pardon the apparently incoherent set of observations which I shall set down in this chapter.

Original drawings, preliminary sketches and studies by Hals are exceedingly rare and almost non-existent. Two drawings in the Teyler Museum at Haarlem of portions of the first Doelen Group of 1616 are now quite understood to be mere sketches or notes from the picture by some not very strong draughtsman at a subsequent date. I venture to believe that the washed drawing for the great Regenten picture of 1641 in the Albertina Collection at Vienna is not, as is generally supposed, a preliminary note of his intentions by Hals, but, as in the case of the Teyler Museum Drawings, a subsequent memorandum by another hand. There is one drawing in the British Museum which may possibly be by Frans Hals, but it cannot be insisted on. But, on the other hand, I do certainly incline to believe—although where standards of comparison are so scarce it will be understood that assertion is difficult—that the very beautiful drawing of a woman (No. 2) in the possession of Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower is a genuine drawing by Hals.

This almost total absence of original drawings by Hals

would seem to imply that his practice was to set down his subject on his canvas with little or no preliminary preparation. That this would be so in such a subject as *La Bohémienne*, or in any of his full-speed efforts at expression, one can readily understand; but one is surprised to find that there is no evidence of previous arrangement and composition in the case of his larger, carefully studied Doelen groups. They may, however, have been of the nature of the merest rough memoranda, and as such did not commend themselves to the collectors, who treasured the expensive drawings of a Holbein, of a Van Dyck, or a Rembrandt. But at least we may conclude that his portraits were commenced without the careful and complete preliminary sketch which many of the great portrait-painters employed.

In this connection the question naturally suggests itself, did Hals, on the canvas itself, prepare, as so many Dutchmen did, a monochrome, or indeed any form of preliminary under-painting? That this was the practice of the Dutch school who followed him, and who are thought to have derived their views of technique from his example, is quite certain. It was done not only by the figure-painters, but even by the landscapists and sea-painters, the brown under-painting frequently reasserting itself as time has proceeded.

And one argues that therefore it is likely to have been a practice by Hals. But, so far as I know, there is no picture by him which remains in an unfinished state, nor has any restorer who has cleaned one of Hals' pictures down to the ground and then covered it up again with his own paint as yet broken silence as to his discoveries. I have carefully examined one or two pictures where a flake of colour has scaled off, leaving the canvas bare. The colour below is a warmish brown, but the evidence is of no value, since that tone is always present in an old canvas, the mere action of the oil sufficing to stain it.

Hals used canvas of a medium texture, and, so far as I know, never of the very coarse texture which many painters, notably the Venetians, have employed. The canvas of the *Schlapphut* is somewhat coarser than most. He employed oak panel frequently in his earlier pictures, but rarely in his later work.

2. STUDY FOR A PORTRAIT.

(*Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower.*)

Hals used medium-sized brushes, as one can assure oneself in some of his later works, where he has left strong, dark sweeps of the brush visible on the canvas. For the details of hair, indeed, he employed quite a small brush.

His treatment of hair is characteristic. On the whole he may be said to have dealt with hair less in full mass than, for example, Velazquez or Van Dyck: and he makes out his hair, and also the beard and moustache, much more in separate detail than those artists. There are times when this method of rendering the separate hairs on top of the general mass becomes somewhat wiry and unpleasant; and one especially notices that where the head comes against its background, he has a tendency to break the fine mass of the hair by corkscrew-like touches round the edge.

He employs, as we have several times noticed, and especially in the first half of his career, a full brush of fluid colour. There is rarely much impasto such as we see in Rembrandt, and no digging into or dragging of thickly-loaded masses. His surface, therefore, dried evenly, and sometimes with a slightly enamel-like effect; and it may at once be said that, regarded as mere "surface," and not as a means to an end, it is not delightful in the same sense as a few square inches of surface by Titian or G. F. Watts.

It is probable, one may almost say evident, that he always painted in at one handling, never trusting to second paintings or caressings of surface, but leaving it as he had placed it. His pictures are, as a rule, in very sound condition, owing to this simple and direct method.

Of the rapidity and directness of his handling his pictures are the best witnesses. But perhaps one may call in the well-worn story of Van Dyck's visit to his studio as corroborative evidence, since such a story, true or not, could not have taken root if it had not been common knowledge that Hals was a very rapid worker. The tale is that Van Dyck, on his way to England, paid, incognito, a visit to the studio of Hals. The latter was fetched (it is needless to say that the later retailers have learnt that he was fetched from a public house), as if for one who wanted a portrait painted, and, setting to work, completed a head with extraordinary rapidity. Then Van Dyck, saying that

painting seems a very easy art, asks leave to try his hand, and in his turn produces a fine and rapid sketch of Hals, who is made to exclaim: "You must be either Van Dyck or the Devil." The value of the anecdote, if any, is its bearing upon the one-sitting style of handling which one so often recognizes in the work of Frans Hals. There is also a tradition attached to the portrait by Hals of Vincent Laurensz. Van der Vinne at Dresden, that it was completed in one hour.

He has, especially in his later pictures, a curious partiality for not setting his portraits straight in their frame, but throwing them somewhat athwart the picture. This attitude will be seen best in the *Schlapphut* (No. 49) and the *Merry Toper* of Amsterdam.

A still more noticeable peculiarity is his liking to paint a head very slightly over life-size. The trait can be noticed, so far as I have observed, only in his later portraits, and never in those which date from before 1641. It is associated only with the most dashing and summary examples of his handling, and it is obvious that it could only be employed by a painter who intended to force the spectator to view his pictures from a considerable distance. The *Jan Hornebeek* (Brussels) and the *Schlapphut* of Cassel both show this trait, as well as a few others.

Hals painted a glove, or a gloved hand, as no man else, save Velazquez, could paint one. A fine instance will be found in the *Colonel Jan Claasz. Loo* of the Doelen picture, 1633 (No. 27).

A mannerism of Hals may be observed in the strong line of deep red, which he very often uses at the parting of the lips, not losing it or softening it away into the adjoining planes. This trait is commonly seized on by a restorer, and greatly exaggerated by renewing it in harsher and more solid colour. A notable example is the *Nurse and Child* at Berlin (No. 21).

Lastly, I would set down the following list of notable propositions concerning Hals, always limiting them by the reserve, "so far as is known to me," and "so far as the pictures which we possess can be accepted as representative of his complete output."

Hals never painted a religious subject.

Hals never painted a classical subject.

36. A MERRY DRINKER.
(*Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.*)

Hals never painted an historical subject.

Hals never painted a nude subject.

Hals never painted a subject in which either a moral motive, or a pathetic motive was the *raison d'être* of the picture.

Hals rarely painted children.

Hals rarely painted an animal. There is a dog in the 1627 Doelen picture; a woodpecker (difficult to find) in the tree at the back of the portrait of himself and his wife; an owl, a mere witch's symbol and hardly a bird, in the *Hille Bobbe*. But there is no evidence that he had any sympathy with animals, and there is nothing remarkable even in his handling of their texture.

Hals never introduced a horse in his picture; unlike Velazquez, whose horses, especially their heads, are full of intelligent and masterly understanding of the animal.

Hals never painted landscape for its own sake, and otherwise than as a background or accessory to his portraits. He has left behind him no such studies as Velazquez left; nor even in his portraits is he at all liberal in his employment of landscape or foliage.

CHAPTER XVII

CONCLUSION

AS we have followed Frans Hals step by step along his career, it must often have seemed to the reader, as it has also to the writer, that one by one we were taking from him his claim to this gift or to that, until we have left him with few gifts worth having. And to some extent it is so, since to the true understanding of the man it has been necessary to set forth his limitations with just as much distinctness as his strength. And, indeed, if the reader has grasped the interpretation which I have tried to make clear of Frans Hals' position in art, he will have realized the fact that it is the very existence of these limitations which makes that position. He was not the thinker that Rembrandt was. He had not his colour or his surface. He had not the grace and the charm of Van Dyck. He had not the grave and solemn dignity, or the mastery over the play of light and shade in colour that Velazquez had. He had not the exuberance of tint, or the sense of scenic splendour of Rubens. He lacked, as the list at the end of the last chapter will have shown us, many sympathies, or at least he laid them by; he ignored many fields of thought, or at least he found no time to dally with them, and he put from him opportunities which many another artist would have delighted to use. He was one of the great artists of the world,[1] not because he lacked

[1] Since the pages of this book were in type, Dr. G. C. Williamson has drawn my attention to a criticism in the "Conversations of James Northcote, R.A.," pp. 52, 53 (Methuen and Co.), 1901, which bears so closely on much that has been said in this book, that it must be quoted in full: "Now Frans Hals was a great painter: for truth of character, indeed, he was the greatest painter that ever existed. Sir Joshua had a portrait by him in his library, which Titian could not have surpassed. Hals made no beauties; his portraits are of people such as you meet with every day in the street. He was not a successful painter—his works were not orna-

all these things, but in spite of having lacked all these things. And that is much to say.

In the life and letters of Charles Darwin it is said—I forget whether he says it himself in his letters, or whether it is said for him—that as a young man he had possessed several tastes which wholly disappeared and were unrecovered by him as he became entirely absorbed in the one great and single pursuit of his life. He said that his mind had become atrophied to these tastes, under the all-absorbing interests of his great search. And through this parallel I think we shall be able to interpret the like phenomenon in Frans Hals. In his early works are, here and there, clear indications of many gifts such an artist might covet—gifts of refined and sensitive colour, of grave and dignified character-reading, of decorative sense—and these are all, as time goes on, atrophied, as it were, some in greater degree and some in less, that the one overmastering gift of the man may be developed to its fullest. He either leaves them on one side, or else takes them along with him as unnoticed followers in his progress.

I do not say that Hals did this consciously, or of a set purpose known to himself and recognized as such. All that I say is that he did it. I do not say that there was any heroic sense of self-sacrifice on his part, whereby he wittingly set aside all that might have led to popularity for the sake of some great principle in Art. All that I say is that the sacrifice was made. Probably—one may perhaps even say certainly—Hals was not a man of universally comprehensive grasp, even if his life had been laid out, as we know it was not, to the fullest profit in all its hours. The strength of such a man often develops its best along its lines of least resistance. And a certain narrowness of aim, as we sometimes rate it, has given to the man his true greatness after all, which he would have missed if he had dissi-

mental—they did not move—they did not give all his sitters were whilst he saw them before him—but what they did give they gave with a truth that no man could surpass. I have sometimes said Titian was the greatest painter in the world, and take him all in all he was; he gave a solemn grandeur which is very fine indeed. But still if I had wanted *an exact likeness* I should have preferred Frans Hals. . . . Frans Hals possessed one great advantage over many other men; his mechanical power was such that he was able to hit off a portrait on the instant; he was able to shoot the bird flying—so to speak—with all its freshness about it, which Titian does not seem to have done."

pated himself abroad in search of this quality and of that which was not native to him—which was not his true soul as he was to face it. As it is, we have in him a mighty artist, perhaps the mightiest of all in his single line, certainly the most robust, and it is as ungrateful as it is futile to complain because, in other lines, there are mightier than he.

In estimating the meaning in Hals' career of this single-eyed choice of his, it must never be forgotten that he chose a road, and kept it, which was not the nearest road to fortune or to popularity. We have not claimed for poor Hals that he did this with any conscious sense of a high mission—his lights of consciously high purpose were perhaps in all ways dim enough. But we cannot, on the other hand, suppose that he was unconscious—to suppose it would imply incredible stupidity and lack of shrewdness—that a very little treason to his instincts as an artist, a very little unreal embodying of the qualities which make for popularity, would have brought more sitters to the studio, and perhaps kept actual poverty from his door. We should have had a far smaller artist, and Mrs. Hals would have had a far larger store of fuel. There have been lives cast, it is true, in a higher mould—take, for example, the life of Jean François Millet—which earn from us all our deepest sympathy, our highest admiration, because the artist followed his Star, and possessed his own soul to the bitter end in the face of misunderstanding, of disappointment, and even of poverty. I know no standard of justice which should withhold from Hals the same meed of admiration, not for the general level of his life—we have never asked for that—but for the one great quality which shines out of the darkness and gives to it all a certain pathetic nobility in spite of all its faults—just as his own genius brings splendour out of the dark shadow and tottering lines of his latest pictures. To him as a painter, and we have written of him throughout as that, belongs the highest praise which can be given to any artist, that he dared to see unflinchingly with his own eyes, and dared to paint fearlessly what he thought he saw.

Essentially, therefore, it will be said, a man of limitations. True, or truer still, to say that he was a man who has given far less than perhaps he had to give. In that indifference of his to

what everybody else might think, or see, or want from him in his pictures, we see at once that wilful side of the artistic temperament which is so often associated with genius, and the reason why he has offered us in the upshot less than he had in him to offer. It is not exactly scorn, this indifference of his—it is too indifferent, too natural, too unconscious to be scorn. He simply does not heed. He is carried forward by his own artistic impulse to his own artistic end. If your artistic aim and impulse be different, what matter to him? He is, therefore, always himself, spontaneous, natural, unconscious. I have heard exactly the opposite view of him maintained by artists who have seen in him one who was ever ready to display his superb technique, and to flourish it before the eyes of the onlooker to his amazement and admiration. For myself I can but say that I have wholly failed to find any evidence of this. Hals does not attitudinize before an audience. He does not play a part; he is simply himself throughout the whole piece, unconscious that there is any audience or any other actor.

We have used the word Genius in connection with Frans Hals, and this forces us to ask, Was Frans Hals a Genius? If we set him beside some of those colossi whom by common consent we recognize as Geniuses—Michelangelo, for example, or Shakespeare—we may think that his one great gift compares poorly with their many. But let it be remembered, that there is more than one kind of Genius. There is the many-sided Genius, comprehensive, all-embracing, such as the Michelangelo aforesaid; but there is also the one-line Genius, such as, for example, Nelson, who was indeed a Genius, if ever there was one, in his single department, but certainly in no other. And Hals was a Genius of this latter type—that is to say, if we admit that one of the marks by which we may discern Genius from Excellence lies in the fact that we can recognize—and genius can only be gauged instinctively, never by set definition—in its works an indefinable something which cannot be attained to by any amount of perseverance, or industry, or cultivation of gifts, no matter how good or worth having; nor by love, refinement, strength; nor by any of the qualities which go to make great painters, and yet do not constitute Genius. For Genius, though it is helped by all of these, and cannot do without them if it is to

reach its greatest and give us of its greatest, yet is a something apart from, beyond, and in a sense above all these. It is always of the nature of an inspiration. It can be even seen and felt where it lacks, often sadly lacks, those other great supports.

Now if we apply this test to Frans Hals, we shall find him answer to it. There is in him always that same indefinable something which lifts him, even in his least pleasing and least worthy efforts, outside the region of the most excellent of whom excellence alone can be predicated. There were in Holland in the days of the great Dutch School scores of men who painted a portrait excellently, with the soundest and most skilful technique, showing many qualities which had been brought to the highest point—in a word, good and even first-rate men. But set their portraits beside one of Hals', and we shall see at once that Hals has indeed that aforesaid indefinable something—no man can say where it begins or where it ends, or of what it exactly consists—which claims for the Great Master of Haarlem, for the poor occupant of the grave in St. Bavon, the title of a Genius.

LIST OF WORKS BY FRANS HALS

(*So far as obtainable*)

ARRANGED ACCORDING TO THE GALLERIES IN WHICH THEY ARE HUNG

No responsibility is accepted by the Author for the attributions of the pictures in this list. The pictures are given as they appear in the official catalogues of the various Public Galleries, and, in the case of important private galleries, according to the view of the owner. The confusion which would result from any other method has necessitated this one.

The Author has done his best to obtain complete and accurate information; but the list is nevertheless incomplete, and, it is to be feared, inaccurate in some cases, owing to the many changes of ownership which have taken place in the last twenty years, especially in the private collections of France. The list *must* therefore at present be regarded as tentative and approximate only.

Hanfstängl photo.]

34 (B). WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN, 1635.

(*Brussels Gallery.*)

LIST OF WORKS

The pictures which are marked with a dagger (†) are reproduced in this volume.

AUSTRIA-HUNGARY.

BUDA-PEST—NATIONAL GALLERY (once Collection Esterhazy).

A MAN'S PORTRAIT.

PRAGUE—RUDOLFINUM GALLERY.

PORTRAIT OF JASPER SCHADE VAN WESTRUM.

Painted at Utrecht in 1645, during a visit paid by Hals to that town. Of the same date as the *Jan Hoornebeek* at Brussels.

VIENNA—BELVEDERE ROYAL GALLERY.

1297. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN with fair hair and moustache, in a large black hat. 2 ft. 8 in. × 1 ft. 11 in.

LIECHTENSTEIN GALLERY.

†FULL-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN, HOLDING A SWORD. Known as *The Man with the Sword.*

Sold at the Oosten de Bruyn sale at Haarlem in 1800 for £4 5*s*.

BELGIUM.

ANTWERP—ROYAL MUSEUM. Catalogue, 1894.

188.† A YOUNG FISHER BOY OF THE ENVIRONS OF HAARLEM. Canvas.

The landscape added by a later hand, probably Jacob Ruysdael.

189. PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN. Attributed to the Master.

628. PORTRAIT OF AN ELDERLY WOMAN. Once attributed to Frans Hals.

Now left in doubt.

BRUSSELS—ROYAL MUSEUM. Catalogue, 1889.

282.† PORTRAIT OF JAN HOORNEBEEK OF UTRECHT, Professor at the University of Leyden. AETAT SUAE 27, 1635. Canvas (rather fine in grain). 2 ft. 7 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

Painted in 1645 during a visit of the painter to Utrecht.

283.† PORTRAIT OF WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN, Founder of the Almshouse at Haarlem. Panel. Signed F. H. 1 ft. 6 in. × 1 ft. 2 in.

Either a repetition or a first idea for a portrait of the same size, more highly finished, which was bought by M. de Rothschild at the Van Brenen sale in 1865.

ARENBERG GALLERY.

SINGING BOYS.
A MERRY TIPPLER.

LILLE—MUSEUM.

LAUGHING GIRL, 1645.

BRITISH ISLES.

LONDON—NATIONAL GALLERY.

1021.† PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. Small half-length, in black, with her hair combed back, a white cap, a large white ruff and wristbands, her hands crossed before her. Canvas. 2 ft. × 1 ft. 6 in.

Purchased from Mr. F. A. Keogh from the interest of the "Lewis Fund" in 1876.

1251.† PORTRAIT OF A MAN. Bust portrait, turned to the right, in a sitting posture, looking out at the spectator, a fresh-coloured man of about forty years of age, with short brown hair, moustache, and chintuft, in a black satin doublet and voluminous ruff. Light warm gray background, on which is inscribed "FI. AETAT. SUAE (?) ANO 1633." One of the numerals giving the age is almost obliterated; the other *must* have been cut away in remounting the picture. Canvas. 2 ft. 1 in. × 1 ft. 7 in.

Presented in 1888 by Miss E. S. Wood in accordance with the will of her uncle, the late Mr. Decimus Burton.

WALLACE COLLECTION, HERTFORD HOUSE.

84.† PORTRAIT OF AN OFFICER. Known as *The Laughing Cavalier.* Panel. 2 ft. 9 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

See List of Old Masters' Exhibitions (1888) in this volume.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE, HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN with light hair, moustache, and beard, in black dress with collar.

MARQUIS OF BUTE, REGENT'S PARK, N.W.

PORTRAIT, 1635.

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE, DEVONSHIRE HOUSE.

†PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST. Undated.

Frontispiece of this volume.

†PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. Undated.

EARL OF ELLESMERE, BRIDGEWATER COLLECTION.

BUST PORTRAIT OF A FRESH-COMPLEXIONED WOMAN, in black dress, white cap, and large ruff. Panel. 1 ft. × 1 ft.

Hanfstängl photo.]

28. PORTRAIT OF A MAN, 1633.

(*National Gallery, London.*)

Hanfstängl photo.]

37. PORTRAIT OF A MAN, 1636.

(*Buckingham Palace.*)

Hanfstängl photo.]

41. PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

(*National Gallery, London.*)

43B. PORTRAIT OF HEER PIETER TIARCK.

(*Sir Cuthbert Quilter, Bart.*)

Hollyer photo.]

53. PORTRAIT OF A YOUTH.

(*Lord Ronald Sutherland Gower.*)

EARL OF NORTHBROOK'S COLLECTION, 4, HAMILTON PLACE, PICCADILLY.

†PORTRAIT OF PIETER, son of Cornelius Van der Morsch. Panel, oak. 2 ft. 9 in. × 2 ft. 2 in. Known as *The Herring Seller.*

PORTRAIT OF A MAN in black with white ruff. Half length. The face seen in three-quarters, turned to the left. Gray hair and moustache and short beard; with his left arm he holds up a basket containing herrings packed in straw; in his right hand he holds up a herring. Dark green background; on the right are the words "WIE BEGEERT."; on the left a shield bearing a half unicorn argent rising from the water, and the date "AETAT SUAE 73 1616."

Collection M. Van Tol, Leyden. Sold June 15th, 1772, No. 8, for 15 florins (£1 5*s.*) to Mr. Delfos. Bought from Mr. Martin Colnaghi, 1866.

See Van der Willigen, "Les Artistes de Harlem," 1870, pp. 34, 89.

Another portrait of the same man by an unknown painter is in the Museum at Leyden, Catalogue of 1879, No. 1418. He was official messenger of the Corporation, also a member of the Chamber of Rhetoric. A drawing after the Hals portrait by Vincent Van der Vinne belongs to Mr. Wertheimer, Amsterdam.

SIR CUTHBERT QUILTER'S COLLECTION, 74, SOUTH AUDLEY STREET.

†PORTRAIT OF PIETER TIARCK. (See Old Masters' Exhibition List, 1891.)

ALTHORP—EARL SPENCER'S COLLECTION.

†PORTRAIT OF FRANS HALS.

†PORTRAIT OF ADMIRAL DE RUYTER.

HAMPTON COURT PALACE. Catalogue by Ernest Law, 1900.

676. WHOLE-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF A MAN—a sketch. Facing in front, his left hand on the hip, his right holding a stick. He wears a drab suit, a large broad-brimmed yellow hat, and garters and shoes of the same colour. The background is a red curtain; behind, on the left, are seen two figures. Canvas. 2 ft. × 1 ft.

682. A LAUGHING BOY. A head turned to the right, the face thrown upwards; he is laughing and showing his teeth. He wears a brown dress with a broad lace-edged collar, tied with red strings. His hat is a large black one with a white feather and broad brim turned up. On wood. 1 ft. 7 in. × 1 ft.

This is perhaps "Young Man's picture, laughing, by young Quentin," entered in the Commonwealth inventory, folio 486, as sold to Mr. Wright, March 22nd, 1650, for £6.

PENSHURST, HAMMERFIELD—LORD RONALD SUTHERLAND GOWER'S COLLECTION.

†PORTRAIT OF A DUTCH WOMAN. Half length. Coloured chalks. 1 ft. 3 in. × 11 in.

†PORTRAIT OF A BOY. Oil on copper. 6 in. × 4½ in.

FOR OTHER WORKS IN ENGLISH HANDS see the List of Works exhibited at the Winter Exhibitions of Old Masters given in this volume.

EDINBURGH—CORPORATION GALLERIES OF ART. Catalogue, 1901.

35.† A DUTCH GENTLEMAN. The figure, almost life-size and three-quarters length, is turned slightly to the right; the back of the right hand rests on the hip, the left hangs by the side. The face is clean-shaven except for a wiry little moustache and a tuft below the under-lip; the eyebrows are short but strongly marked, the hair dark, the complexion gray but ruddy. He wears a broad black hat, a wide white collar and cuffs, a black doublet, and a black cloak or drapery, thrown about the body below the armpits, conceals the lower part of the figure. The background is dark gray with a dash of green in it, and the figure is strongly lit from the left. Canvas. 3 ft. 10 in. × 2 ft. 10 in. Painted during the artist's middle period, 1635-40. Engraved on wood by Jonnard for "Magazine of Art," 1890.

Presented by Mr. William M'Ewan, M.P., LL.D., 1885.

36.† A DUTCH LADY. The figure, almost three-quarters length and life-size, is turned towards the left, and the arms being brought forward the hands lie one above the other in front, the left in a loose white glove, the right, in which is a closed fan, bare. The gown is black with full sleeves and wide skirt; round her neck is a white linen collar, over which a semi-transparent neckerchief is worn; her sleeves are white. The fresh-complexioned face, almost full front, is accentuated by dark gray eyes, a dark shadow under the nose, and a dark line between the slightly open lips; the eyebrows are scarcely marked. The fair hair falls in a wavy mass at each side of her face, and she wears a little black headdress or cap. Background of greenish gray, graduated from right to left, has a shadow in the right lower corner. Canvas. 3 ft. 10 in. × 2 ft. 10 in. Painted during the artist's middle period, 1635-40.

Presented by Mr. William M'Ewan, M.P., LL.D., 1885.

GLASGOW—CORPORATION GALLERIES OF ART. Catalogue, 1901.

371. HEAD OF A BOY, nearly full face, laughing, holding in his left arm a spaniel, the head of which only is seen. Panel, circular, 11 in. diameter.

Engraved in 1801 by T. Gaugain (the dog's head and the hand being left out). Purchased from the Sir Andrew Fountaine (Narford Hall) Collection, 1894.

372. HEAD OF A BOY, nearly in profile, looking to the left; he holds a whistle in his left hand. Companion to No. 371. Panel, circular, 11 in. diameter.

Engraved in 1801 by T. Gaugain. Purchased from the Sir Andrew Fountaine (Narford Hall) Collection, 1894.

SIR DAVID BAIRD'S COLLECTION.

†A LAUGHING BOY. Panel. 10 in. × 10 in.

32. PORTRAIT OF A MAN.

(*Corporation Gallery, Edinburgh.*)

33. PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

(*Corporation Gallery, Edinburgh.*)

52. BOY WITH GRAPES.

(*Sir D. Baird.*)

FRANCE.

BORDEAUX—MUSEUM.

A SINGING BOY, 1625.

LOUVRE. Catalogue (no date).

2383.† PORTRAIT OF RENÉ DESCARTES. 2 ft. 6 in. × 2 ft. 3 in.
2384.† LA BOHÉMIENNE. 1 ft. 11 in. × 1 ft. 8 in.
2385.† PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. 3 ft. 7 in. × 2 ft. 8 in.
2386.† PORTRAIT OF NICOLAS VAN BERESTEYN. 4 ft. 6 in. × 3 ft. 4 in.
2387.† PORTRAIT OF MADAME VAN BERESTEYN. 4 ft. 6 in. × 3 ft. 4 in.
2388.† PORTRAIT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE VAN BERESTEYN FAMILY. Canvas. 5 ft. 6 in. × 8 ft.

GERMANY.

AACHEN—SUERMONDT MUSEUM.

A MERRY DRINKER. (Lent from Berlin Museum, where it stood as 801B.) 2 ft. 5 in. × 1 ft. 10½ in.

BERLIN—MUSEUM.

766. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN in a violet cloak and high collar. Copper. 7 in. × 5 in. Bears the date 1627 on the right.

767. PORTRAIT OF THE PREACHER JOHANNES ACRONIUS. Wearing a clerical dress, small black cap, and low white collar. Oak, oval. 8 in. × 7 in. Signed on the right, "Aetat suae 62. A° 1627."

The life of Acronius is written out on the back of the panel. In the year 1786 this picture was sold at the sale of Johannes Enschede's Collection at Haarlem for three florins (five shillings).

800. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN in a broad-brimmed hat, with a loose cravat. Half length, life-size. Canvas. 2 ft. 6 in. × 1 ft. 11 in. Probable date about 1625 (W. B.).

801. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN dressed in black, wearing a gold chain over the flat lace collar. A small lace cap on the back of her head. Bracelets. Half length, figure life-size. Canvas. 2 ft. 6 in. × 1 ft. 11 in.

Companion figure to 800. Probable date about 1625 (W. B.).

801A. A SINGING BOY: wears a cap with a feather: holds a flute in his right hand. Signed on right F. H. Canvas. 2 ft. 2 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

Probably about 1625 (W. B.).

801C.† HILLE BOBBE. Holds a pewter pot in her right hand. An owl on her left shoulder. Canvas. 2 ft. 6 in. × 2 ft. 1 in.

On the back the partly obliterated words, apparently in the master's own hand: "N. Alle. Bobbe Van Haarlem Frans Hals." The name should, therefore, probably be "Alle Bobbe."

801E. PORTRAIT OF AN ELDERLY MAN in black velvet suit and cloth mantle, with small flap collar. Holds his gloves in his hands. Signed

on right. Three-quarters length, life size. Canvas. 3 ft. 4 in. × 2 ft. 8 in.

Painted in 1660 (W. B.).

801F. PORTRAIT OF A NOBLEMAN, turned to left, with a pointed beard; in rich black dress, with broad felt hat and large collar; gloved hands; a cloak drops from his shoulder. Panel. 2 ft. 1 in. × 1 ft. 8 in.

Date on the back, 1625.

801G.† PORTRAIT OF A NURSE, holding in her left arm a baby—said to be of the family of Ilpenstein—before whom she holds up an apple. The child wears a richly brocaded dress, lace collar, cuffs, and stomacher. The nurse's figure half length. Canvas. 2 ft. 10 in. × 2 ft. 1½ in.

801H. PORTRAIT OF TYMAN OOSDORP, slightly turned to right; short beard; light hair; black mantle. Canvas. 6 ft. 8 in. × 5 ft. 10 in.

Date on the back, 1656.

CASSEL—ROYAL GALLERY. Catalogue, 1901.

213.† PORTRAIT OF A NOBLEMAN. Thirty-nine years old. Three-quarters length. Canvas upon wood. 3 ft. 4 in. × 2 ft. 6 in.

214.† PORTRAIT OF THE WIFE OF THE ABOVE. Some thirty years old. Three-quarters length. Canvas upon wood. 3 ft. 4 in. × 2 ft. 8 in.

215. TWO SINGING BOYS. Canvas. 2 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 8 in.

216. THE MERRY DRINKER (a mountebank). Signed. Canvas. 2 ft. 5 in. × 2 ft.

217. BUST OF A MAN. In his thirtieth year. Wood. 1 ft. × 8 in.

218. BUST OF A MAN. From thirty-five to forty years old. Side view of the foregoing. Wood. 1 ft. × 7 in.

219.† THE YOUNG MAN WITH THE FLAP HAT. Full-size bust. Canvas. 2 ft. 7 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

COLOGNE—BARON OPPENHEIM'S COLLECTION.

TWO PICTURES OF CHILDREN.
A PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN.

DRESDEN—MUSEUM. Catalogue, 1876.

938. A MAN'S PORTRAIT. Panel. 10 in. × 7 in.

939. A PORTRAIT OF A MAN IN BLACK. Panel. 10 in. × 8 in.

940. A PORTRAIT OF A MAN IN BLACK. Panel. 1 ft. 1 in. × 10 in.

2367. PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST VINCENT LAURENS VAN DER VINNE. Wood. 2 ft. 1 in. × 1 ft. 6 in.

According to a tradition in the Van der Vinne family this portrait was painted in one hour (see A. Van de Willigen, "Les Artistes de Harlem," p. 143).

236. HILLE BOBBE, WITH A YOUNG MAN SMOKING BEHIND HER. Canvas. 3 ft. 2 in. × 4 ft. 1 in.

Generally recognized as the work of F. Hals the son.

2425. HALF-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG LADY. Canvas. 2 ft. 6 in. × 2 ft. 1 in.

22. PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

(*Berlin Museum.*)

Hanfstängl photo.]

35. MAN IN A LACE COLLAR.

(*Dresden.*)

DÜSSELDORF.

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG WOMAN. (Lent from Berlin Museum, where it stood as 801J.) 2 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 10 in.

GOTHA.

108. HALF-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF A MAN OF ABOUT FORTY TO FIFTY, in broad-brimmed hat. Canvas. 2 ft. 10 in. × 2 ft. 9 in.

109. HALF-LENGTH PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN in black silk cloak, with broad-brimmed hat. Canvas. 2 ft. 1 in. × 1 ft. 8 in.

HAMBURG—GALLERY.

THE MAN WITH THE HERRING BARREL. Panel.

WEBER COLLECTION.

187. A MAN'S PORTRAIT. Engraved by W. Unger. Once in W. Van de Willigen's Collection at Haarlem.

The face of the man bears a strong resemblance to the portrait of a man in the National Gallery, London, and may possibly be the same after a lapse of years.

188. RENÉ DESCARTES.

MUNICH—ROYAL PINAKOTHEK. Catalogue, 1898.

359. LARGE FAMILY PORTRAIT GROUP. A Father and Mother, sitting in a hall opening on to a park, surrounded by six Children, two of whom are intent on drawing on the left; a third, on the right-hand side, plays with a dog, and three girls in front of him are grouped round a basket of fruit. Canvas. 7 ft. 4 in. × 10 ft. Kurf Gallery in Munich.

The attribution to Hals originates from the old inventories, and is to be found with Van Gool, Neuwe Schonburgh, etc., 1750. Lately a number of well-known connoisseurs are agreed in attributing this work to Cornelius de Vos.

SCHWERIN—GALLERY.

444. LIFE-SIZE BUST PORTRAIT OF A LAUGHING BOY, holding a flute near to his mouth. Oak panel, circular, diameter 11 in.

445. LIFE-SIZE BUST PORTRAIT OF A LAUGHING BOY, in the act of putting a glass to his mouth. Companion picture to 444. Oak panel, circular, diameter 11 in.

446. LIFE-SIZE BUST PORTRAIT OF A MAN, with light brown hair, between thirty and forty years old; in white ruff and black coat. Gray green ground. Oak panel. 1 ft. 4 in. × 1 ft. 2 in.

Formerly attributed to Van Dyck.

447. LIFE-SIZE BUST PORTRAIT OF A MAN, with dark hair, about thirty-five years old; in a white ruff and dark clothes. Brown ground. Companion of 446. Oak panel. 1 ft. 4 in. × 1 ft. 2 in.

Formerly attributed to Van Dyck. Not generally accepted as a work by Frans Hals.

448. A PIPER. Bust portrait. Brown ground. Canvas. 8 in. × 7 in.

An old copy.

449. A VIOLIN PLAYER. Bust portrait. Brown ground. Canvas. 8 in. × 7 in. Companion to No. 448.

An old copy.

STETTIN—MUSEUM.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN. 1643.
PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. 1643.

STUTTGART—ART MUSEUM.

358. MAN WITH A FALCON.

HOLLAND.

AMSTERDAM—RIJKS MUSEUM. Catalogue of 1901.

441 (111).† PORTRAIT OF FRANS HALS AND HIS SECOND WIFE, LYSBETH REYNIERS. No date. Canvas. 4 ft. 8 in. × 5 ft. 6 in.

442 (112).† "THE FOOL," "THE JESTER," OR "MANDOLIN PLAYER" (an old copy, probably by Dirk Hals or by one of the sons of the painter; original owned by Baron Gustav Rothschild, in Paris). Canvas. 2 ft. 2 in. × 1 ft. 11 in.

443 (113).† A MERRY DRINKER. Signed; no date. Canvas, much cut down. 2 ft. 8 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

Commonly assigned to about 1627. The author would place it many years later.

444 (113A).† THE CIVIC GUARDS UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPTAIN REYNIER REAEL, 1637 (*La Compagnie Maigre*). Canvas. 6 ft. 8 in. × 14 ft.

Finished by Pieter Codde.
The left-hand figure only reproduced in this volume.

445. PORTRAIT OF A MAN (probably Nicolaes Hasselaer). Canvas. 2 ft. 7 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

This portrait is identified through its likeness to the portrait of Nicolaes Hasselaer in the Regenten group by Abraham de Vos, 1635, in the Burgerweeshuis at Amsterdam.

446. PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN (probably Geertruyt Van Erp, the wife of 445). Canvas. 2 ft. 7 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

The portrait bears a striking resemblance, however, to a lady painted by Johannes Cornelius Verspronck, No. 215, Haarlem Gallery.

447.† PORTRAIT OF MARIA VOOGT, a lady of the Van der Meer family. AETATIS SUAE. 62. Half length. Canvas. 4 ft. 1 in. × 3 ft.

—— (No number in Catalogue.) MAN'S PORTRAIT (Nicolaes de Clercq). He wears a black skullcap and carries his right arm in a fold of his robe. Painted not later than 1635.

——† (No number in Catalogue.) FEYNTJE VAN STEENKISTE, the wife of Nicolaes de Clercq. A middle-aged lady in a dark cap. She has her hands folded, and carries a white glove. About the same date as preceding.

29. PORTRAIT OF A MAN. 1634.

(*Boydell Museum, Rotterdam.*)

30. LUCAS LECLERCQ, 1635.

(*Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.*)

31. FEYNTJE VAN STEENKISTE, WIFE OF LUCAS LECLERCQ. 1635.

(*Rijks Museum, Amsterdam.*)

SIX COLLECTION.

1. BUST PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in a broad hat, with a short moustache and pointed beard. Panel. Dated August 12th, 1644.

This picture is believed to represent Nicolaes Tulp, the demonstrator who appears in Rembrandt's *Anatomy Lecture* at the Hague. The picture would have come into Jan Six's possession, because Margaretha, daughter of Van Tulp, married Jan Six.

2. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN, in a narrower hat.

HAARLEM—TOWN HALL COLLECTION. Catalogue of 1901.

84. PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER. Wood, diameter 1 ft. 4 in.

This picture is not by Frans Hals, but by Van der Vinne. A picture, which may be the original, is said to be in the possession of M. E. Warneck, Paris.

85.† BANQUET OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GUILD OF THE ARCHERS OF SAINT GEORGE. Signed. 5 ft. 9 in. × 10 ft. 10 in.

86.† BANQUET OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GUILD OF THE ARCHERS OF SAINT GEORGE. 1627. 5 ft. 8 in. × 7 ft. 6 in.

87.† BANQUET OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GUILD OF THE ARCHERS OF SAINT ADRIAEN. Signed F. H. Painted on the occasion of the departure of the corps for the siege of Hasselt and Mons, October 18th, 1622, under the Colonel and Burgomaster, Willem Voogt. 6 ft. × 8 ft. 10 in.

88.† MEETING OF THE OFFICERS OF THE GUILD OF THE ARCHERS OF SAINT ADRIAEN. Painted in 1633. 6 ft. 9 in. × 11 ft.

89.† OFFICERS AND SUB-OFFICERS OF THE GUILD OF THE ARCHERS OF SAINT GEORGE. Painted in 1639. 6 ft. 8 in. × 13 ft. 8 in.

No. 19 in this picture is traditionally asserted to be Frans Hals.

90.† REGENTS (REGENTEN) OF THE HOSPITAL OF ST. ELIZABETH. Painted in 1641. 5 ft. × 8 ft. 4 in.

91.† REGENTS OF THE OLD MEN'S ALMSHOUSE. Painted in 1664. 5 ft. 7 in. × 8 ft. 4 in.

92.† LADY REGENTS (REGENTESSEN) OF THE OLD MEN'S ALMSHOUSE. Painted in 1664. 5 ft. 6 in. × 8 ft. 2 in.

93.† PORTRAIT OF NICOLAES VAN DER MEER, Burgomaster of Haarlem and Colonel of the old Shooting Guild. Aetat. suae 56, ao. 1631. Wood. 4 ft. 3 in. × 3 ft. 4 in.

94.† PORTRAIT OF CORNELIA VOOGT, wife of Nicolaes Van der Meer. Aetat. suae 53, ao. 1631. Wood. 4 ft. 3 in. × 3 ft. 4 in.

This portrait has the same coat of arms in the corner as the Maria Voogt at Amsterdam.

HAGUE—ROYAL PICTURE GALLERY (MAURITSHUIS). Catalogue of 1899.

459.† PORTRAIT OF JACOB PIETERSZ OLYCAN. Canvas. 4 ft. × 3 ft. 2 in. Signed, "aetat. suae 29. Ao. 1625."

Purchased in 1880 for 10,000 florins with the next.

460.† PORTRAIT OF ALETTA HANEMANS, wife of the preceding. Canvas. 4 ft. × 3 ft. 2 in. Signed, "Aetat. suae 19. Ano. 1625."

618. PORTRAIT OF A MAN. Oak panel. 9 in. × 7 in.

Purchased at Amsterdam, 1898; 5,000 florins.

LEERDAM.

TWO LAUGHING BOYS. In the possession of Mevrouw Van Aarden.

ROTTERDAM.

—— PORTRAIT OF A DUTCH NOBLE.
—— PORTRAIT OF A DUTCH LADY.
—— A SKETCH.

RUSSIA.

ST. PETERSBURG—HERMITAGE. Catalogue of 1895.

770. PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in a large flap hat, wearing a small moustache, his right elbow over the arm of a chair. Half length. Signed, "FH. FH." 2 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 11 in.

Commonly called a portrait of Frans Hals by himself. But the period of the picture is, from the evidence of style, between 1650 and 1660, when Hals was seventy to eighty, whereas this man is between thirty and forty. It is probably a portrait of F. Hals by the son F. Hals (see Sémenoff, "Etudes").

771. PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN, with long fair hair, in a flap hat and white collar. Holds a glove in his left hand. Half length. Signed. Canvas, enlarged above and at sides. 2 ft. 9 in. × 2 ft. 2 in.

Painted about 1635, according to Willem Bode ("Holl. Mäl.," p. 90).

773. PORTRAIT OF A SAILOR. A middle-aged man with long brown hair, in a broad-brimmed hat, white collar, cuirass and yellow jerkin, with large silk scarf (instead of a girdle). Three-quarters length. 2 ft. 9 in. × 2 ft. 10 in.

Painted about 1635, according to W. Bode ("Holl. Mäl.," p. 90).

774. A YOUNG SOLDIER.

No longer attributed to Frans Hals, senior; but rather to F. Hals, the son.

U.S. AMERICA.

BOSTON—MUSEUM.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY in black, seated, with cap and ruff. 4 ft. 1 in. × 3 ft. 3 in.

Bought at Christie's, in London, in 1899, for £2,100.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN in black cloak and hat, with white collar. 4 ft. 1 in. × 3 ft. 3 in.

Bought at Christie's, in London, in 1899, for £3,150.

NEW YORK—METROPOLITAN MUSEUM.

MEETING OF TRAINED BANDS TO CELEBRATE THE PEACE OF MUNSTER.

HILLE BOBBE (?).

Probably by Frans Hals, the son.

IN PRIVATE HANDS IN AMERICA.

THE MERRY TRIO. 1616.

A copy by Dirk Hals is in Berlin Museum.

LIST OF THE PICTURES WHICH HAVE APPEARED UNDER THE NAME OF FRANS HALS IN THE WINTER EXHIBITIONS OF THE WORKS OF OLD MASTERS AT BURLINGTON HOUSE, LONDON, SINCE 1871.

Year.	No. in Catalogue.	Subject.	Lent by
1871	58	PORTRAIT OF CORNELIS DE WAGEN OF HAARLEM. Panel, 23 in. × 22½ in. . .	Mr. G. C. Schwabe.
	50	PORTRAIT OF JAN HORNEBEEK. Panel, 12½ in. × 9½ in.	Miss James.
1872	142	A PORTRAIT. Canvas, 45 in. × 34½ in. .	H.M. Queen Victoria.
	146	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER. Canvas, 26½ in. × 23 in.	Mr. Albert Levy.
	237	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER. Canvas, 24½ in. × 19½ in.	Mr. D. Burton.
1873	97	A PORTRAIT. Panel, 10¾ in. × 8¼ in. .	Mr. Albert Levy.
1876	209	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER. Inscribed: "Aetat suae 66 anno 1628." Panel, 8½ in. circular	Earl of Radnor.
	212	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER'S WIFE. Inscribed: "Aetat suae 60 anno 1628." Panel, 8½ in. circular	Earl of Radnor.
		Either the description or the date of both these pictures is obviously incorrect. See Chapter III.	
1877	29	PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN, in black embroidered dress; long dark hair; right hand extended to take the rose held out by the lady in No. 28. Life-size. Canvas, 45 in. × 34 in.	Mrs. Newman Smith.
	38	PORTRAIT OF A LADY, in black dress open at neck; wide lace collar, lace cap, watch hanging from waist, pearl necklace and bracelet; she holds in her right hand a red rose, which she offers to the gentleman in No. 29. Canvas, 45 in. × 34 in. . .	Mrs. Newman Smith.
	35	PORTRAIT OF A DUTCH LADY. Standing, hands clasped in front; black figured dress, lace cuffs and collar, wide ruff, close cap. Canvas, 40 in. × 31 in. . . .	Sir John Neeld.

Year.	No. in Catalogue.	Subject.	Lent by
1878	91	PORTRAIT OF DAVID TENIERS THE YOUNGER. Half length, standing to left; right hand on hip, left grasping cloak; long auburn hair, low black hat, broad white collar. Canvas, 32 in. × 24 in. .	Mr. J. Louis Miéville.
	270	PORTRAIT OF A FLEMISH GENTLEMAN, in a broad-brimmed black hat, black coat, wide white collar. Canvas, oval, 25 in. × 22 in.	Mr. W. C. Cartwright.
1880	64	PORTRAIT OF A LADY. Three-quarters figure, standing to left, nearly full face; life-size; white cap, stiff ruff, black gold embroidered dress; holding a glove in right hand. Canvas, 45 in. × 34½ in.	Mr. W. Stratford-Dugdale.
1881	59	THE MERRY COMRADE. Bust; life-size; large black hat and brown coat. Signed FH (connected). Canvas, 34 in. × 20 in..	Mr. H. L. Bischoffsheim.
1882	87	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER. Half length; seated to right, full face; right arm on back of a chair, with a paint brush in hand; large black hat, black dress, wide collar. Signed and dated, "F.H. 1635." Canvas, 39 in. × 22 in.	Mr. S. K. Mainwaring.
	107	PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN, said to be the painter; bust, to right, full face; right hand on chest; large broad-brimmed hat, white collar. Canvas, 34 in. × 24½ in. .	Mr. Lewis Fry.
	123	PORTRAIT OF A MAN. Small half figure, seated to right; right arm on the back of a chair; sugar-loaf hat, black dress. Panel, 10½ in. × 8½ in.	Mr. S. Walter.
1884	90	YOUNG MAN PLAYING A GUITAR. Half length, to left, three-quarters profile; fair hair, slight moustache; large white collar, large black hat, dark dress slashed. Signed F.H. (connected). Panel, 32 in. × 29 in. .	Earl Howe.
	98	PORTRAIT OF A CAVALIER. Bust, to right, nearly full face; dark hair and beard; black dress, large black hat, large ruff; both hands visible; right holds a watch. Panel, oval, 25 in. × 20 in. . . .	Earl Howe.
1885	94	THE FIDDLER. Interior of a room. Small three-quarters figure in blue slashed doublet with brown cloak and hose, wide black hat; seated near a table, playing a violin, and a woman in red dress and white cap holding a jug in her right hand and a glass in her left; architectural and curtain background. Signed with monogram and dated 1630. Panel, 26½ in. × 21½ in. . . .	Lord Braybrooke.

Year.	No. in Catalogue.	Subject.	Lent by
1885	105	A DUTCH LADY. Three-quarters figure, seated to left in armchair, holding a book in her hand; black dress, white ruff and cap. Inscribed, "Aetat Suae. 56. Anno 1635." Canvas, 44 in. × 35 in. . .	Mr. David P. Sellar.
1887	80	PORTRAIT OF A MAN. Half-length figure, to left, of a man in a red coat and cap, pointing with his right hand, his laughing face turned towards spectator. Signed on right, FH (connected). Canvas, 30 in. × 24½ in.	Mr. David P. Sellar.
	95	THREE HEADS. A man smoking a pipe; a woman clasping him round the neck; another woman in the background. Panel, 17 in. × 18½ in. (octagonal) . . .	Mr. R. G. Wilberforce.
	97	PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN. Half length, to right, nearly full face; black dress, black coat, large black hat, white ruff; left hand holds a pair of gloves. Canvas, 32 in. × 25 in.	Mr. David P. Sellar.
1888	75	†THE LAUGHING CAVALIER. Half figure, standing to left; three-quarter profile; his left rests on his hip, holding his sword hilt; gaily coloured slashed doublet, lace ruffles, falling collar, large black hat. Inscribed, "aeta. suae 26 A° 1624." Panel, 33 in. × 26 in.	Sir Richard Wallace.
1891	69	†PORTRAIT OF M. PIERRE TIARCK. Half figure, seated to right, looking towards spectator; arms over back of chair; he holds a rose in his right hand; dark dress; large falling collar; large black hat. Painted in an oval. Canvas, 32½ in. × 26½ in. .	Sir W. Cuthbert Quilter.
	71	PORTRAIT OF JOHANN VAN LOO, Colonel of the Archers of St. George. Half figure, standing to right, looking towards spectator; his hands crossed, the left gloved, holding the other glove; black dress; high-crowned hat; white ruff. Inscribed under a coat of arms, "aeta suae." Signed with monogram, dated 1643. Canvas, 36½ in. × 29½ in.	Mr. Martin H. Colnaghi.
	72	LE JOYEUX BUVEUR. Half figure of a man, seated to right; dark cloak lined with blue; large black cap on one side of head; long dishevelled hair; a glass of wine in right hand; the left holds a lute resting upon a table. Signed with monogram. Canvas, 35 in. × 29½ in.	M. Jules Porges.

Year.	No. in Catalogue.	Subject.	Lent by
1891	121	PORTRAIT OF PIETER VAN DEN BROECKE OF ANTWERP, Founder of Batavia. Half figure, seated to right, looking towards spectator; right hand on the top of a cane; black dress, lace collar and cuffs. Canvas, 26½ in. × 21 in.	Sir E. C. Guinness.
	127	PORTRAIT OF A LADY. Half figure, standing, to left, nearly facing spectator; black dress, wide lace collar, lace cuffs and cap; her hands hold a chain from which a fan is suspended. Canvas, 31 in. × 23 in. .	Mr. George Salting.
1892	124	†PORTRAIT OF A MAN, from Buckingham Palace. Half figure, standing to right, face towards spectator; black dress, white ruff; his hand rests on his hip, his left holds his gloves. Inscribed, "Aetat Suae 36. A^no 1630." Canvas, 45 in. × 34 in. .	H.M. Queen Victoria.
1894	81	PORTRAIT OF A BURGOMASTER. Half figure, standing to right, facing spectator; black dress and hat, white collar and cuffs; his right hand holds his cloak, left holds his gloves. Canvas, 31 in. × 43 in. . .	The Earl Amherst.
	86	PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. Half figure, standing in front, looking at spectator; black dress slashed with blue, wide falling collar, large black hat. Inscribed, "Aetatis suae, 26 An° 1636." Canvas, 39½ in. × 29½ in.	The Earl Amherst.
1895	48	LAUGHING BOY. Bust, showing right hand; head thrown back, looking at spectator; laughing; long fair hair; gray dress. Panel, 16 in. × 15 in.	M. Jules Porges.
1902	97	PORTRAIT OF A LADY. Three-quarters figure, standing to left, looking at the spectator; her right hand holds a handkerchief, her left holds the edge of her bodice; black satin dress with gold braid, wide white ruff and cap, lace cuffs. Canvas, 45½ in. × 34 in. Also exhibited in 1870.	Mr. William F. S. Dugdale.
	101	PORTRAIT OF MICHAEL DE WAAL. Half figure, standing in front, looking at the spectator; his right hand holds his gloves, his left on his hip; black dress, cloak, and hat, white lace falling collar and cuffs; brown background. Canvas, 47 in. × 30 in.	Mr. Arthur Sanderson.
	133	PORTRAIT OF A LADY. Half figure, standing to left, looking at spectator; her hands clasped in front of her, one of them gloved; black dress, wide white lace tippet, white cap. Canvas, 36 in. × 26 in. . . .	Mr. Norman Forbes-Robertson.

Year.	No. in Catalogue.	Subject.	Lent by
1902	201	CHILD'S HEAD. Head to left, showing one hand, laughing. Circular panel, 13½ in. × 12 in.	Mr. Henry Pfungst.
	203	CHILD'S HEAD. Bust, to left, head turned over left shoulder; light dress, large straw hat, long fair hair. Circular panel, 14 in. × 12 in.	Mr. Henry Pfungst.

PRICES OBTAINED FOR A FEW PICTURES BY FRANS HALS

There is, so far as the author knows, no record of the price paid to Frans Hals himself for any of his pictures.

		£	s.	d.
1772.	June 15. Van Tol Sale at Leyden. THE †PORTRAIT OF PIETER VAN DER MORSCH, now the property of Lord Northbrook, fetched 15 florins	1	5	0
1786.	Sale of the Enschede Collection (at Haarlem?). THE PORTRAIT OF JOHANNES ACRONIUS, now at Berlin, fetched 3 florins	0	5	0
1800.	April 8. Oosten de Bruyn Sale, Haarlem. The full-size PORTRAIT OF †WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN (*The Man with the Sword*), now in the Liechtenstein Gallery, Vienna, fetched 51 florins	4	5	0
1816.	Van Leyde Sale. †THE MERRY TOPER, now in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, fetched 385 florins . . .	32	1	8
1852.	Six Van Hillegom Sale, at Amsterdam. THE †PORTRAIT OF FRANS HALS AND LISBETH REYNIERS, now in the Rijks Museum, fetched 600 florins	50	0	0
1865.	Pourtalés Sale, Paris. †THE LAUGHING CAVALIER, now in the Wallace Collection (formerly sold by M. Nieuwehuys for £80), fetched (the only bid)	2040	0	0
1880.	The two portraits, now in the Mauritshuis, Hague, of †JACOB PIETERSZ OLYCAN and his wife, †ALETTA HANEMANS, were bought together for	833	6	8
1898.	THE PORTRAIT OF A MAN (panel, 9 in. × 7 in.), now in the Mauritshuis, Hague, was bought for	417	5	0

The following extracts are from "Redford's Art Sales."

1769.	Sir L. Schaub Sale. A MUSIC CONVERSATION . . .	28	0	0
1855	Bernal Sale:			
	(*a*) PORTRAIT OF ADMIRAL DE RUYTER, with a page at his side (18½ in. × 16½ in.).	14	0	0
	(*b*) PORTRAIT OF A LADY, in black dress and lace collar, holding a jewel at her bosom, three-quarters length (34 in. × 26 in.)	2	15	0

		£	s.	d.
1859.	Northbrook Sale. PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER . . .	18	18	0
1872.	Du Blaisel Sale. THE WELCOME (from Pourtalés Collection), bought in	151	5	0
1872.	W. Middleton Sale. PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in black dress and hat	420	0	0
1874.	Twopenny Sale. PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER . . .	35	0	0
1875.	Bredel Sale:			
	BOY WITH A DOG (circular panel, 12 in.) . . .	189	0	0
	HEAD OF A BOY BLOWING BUBBLES (circular panel, 12 in.)	115	10	0
1876.	PORTRAIT OF A BURGOMASTER (panel, 10¾ in. × 8¼ in.). .	157	10	0
1876.	A VIOLIN PLAYER (panel, 32½ in. × 27 in.)	89	0	0
1876.	THE SINGER—a man with a book—(canvas, 23 in. × 19½ in.)	267	10	0
1876.	PORTRAIT OF FRANS HALS, with long gray hair (canvas, 27 in. × 24 in.)	262	10	0
1876.	A NEAPOLITAN SOLDIER (canvas, 30 in. × 25 in.) . .	89	5	0
1876.	PORTRAIT OF COUNT FALKENSTEIN, in black dress (canvas, 30 in. × 24 in.)	299	5	0
1876.	Rixon Sale. PORTRAIT OF A LADY, in black dress, with ruff and cap, dated 1644	399	0	0
1885.	De Zoete Sale:			
	(*a*) PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in black, holding his hat and gloves	1008	0	0
	(*b*) PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in black dress and hat . .	189	0	0

The following particulars of pictures, sold by auction in London, are due to the kindness of Messrs. Christie, Manson, and Wood. There is no record in the books of this firm of the pictures by Hals sold by them before 1887. *This fact is probably due to the extremely low prices obtained for them. Since* 1870 *it has been the rule of the firm to keep no record of the price of any picture which fetches less than* £50 (*or, if bought in,* £100). *But before that date the limit was, it is believed, very much lower. Between* 1769 *and* 1859 *only four are recorded as having been sold, but at prices too low to be worth entering.*

		£	s.	d.
1887.	A CAVALIER holding a glass, with a LADY	194	5	0
1887.	PORTRAIT OF A LADY	50	8	0
1888.	LADY, in a black dress (30 in. × 23 in.)	1680	0	0
1888.	PORTRAIT OF A BURGOMASTER (32 in. × 26 in.) . . .	567	0	0
1890.	PORTRAIT OF THE PAINTER AND HIS WIFE (38½ in. × 31 in.)	1837	10	0
1890.	WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN	73	10	0
1890.	MAN, in black dress, with long hair	1995	0	0
1891.	PORTRAIT OF CORNELIS MEDWAGEN (16 in. × 12½ in.) .	451	10	0
1891.	JAN HORNEBEEK holding a book (12 in. × 9¾ in.) . .	241	10	0

		£	s.	d.
1891.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN (29½ in. × 23 in.)	493	10	0
1892.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN, in a black dress and a ruff (5½ in. × 4¼ in.)	735	0	0
1893.	THE SMOKER	152	5	0
1893.	WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN (18½ in. × 14½ in.)	189	0	0
1894.	BOY WITH A DOG (circular, 11 in.) / HEAD OF A BOY (circular, 11 in.)	682	10	0
	This would appear to be the pair now in Glasgow Corporation Gallery.			
1894.	BOOR, in a red cap and jacket	103	19	0
1894.	LADY, in a black dress and lace ruff	52	10	0
1894.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN, half length, 37½ in. × 25¾ in.	325	10	0
1895.	HEAD OF A MAN, with a red cap (18 in. × 11¼ in.)	430	10	0
1895.	PORTRAIT OF A MAN (octagonal, 26½ in. × 22½ in.)	672	0	0
	PORTRAIT OF A LADY " " "	210	0	0
1895.	A LAUGHING GIRL	252	0	0
1899.	HEAD OF A YOUTH, in a red cap (circular panel, 9 in.)	110	5	0
1899.	COUNT FALKENSTEIN, in a black dress (29 in. × 24 in.)	273	0	0
1899.	MAN, in a black dress and cloak, with a white collar and black hat (49 in. × 39 in.)	3150	0	0
	Sold to go to America. This picture was sold by Messrs. Christie at the Stowe Sale at probably about £24, but at too low a price for entry.			
1899.	LADY, seated, in a black dress, with a cap and white ruff (49 in. × 39 in.)	2100	0	0
	Now in Boston Museum.			
1902.	Saturday, February 1. Executors of H. W. Cholmley. PORTRAIT OF A GENTLEMAN, in black dress and cloak, white collar, large black hat; holding his gloves in his left hand, his right resting on his hip; figure turned to the left (31 in. × 26 in.)	3780	0	0
	Messrs. Robinson and Fisher in 1897 sold a portrait of a gentleman for £3517.			

The following particulars of pictures, sold in Paris, are due to the kindness of M. Paul Chevallier, Commissaire Priseur, 10, *Rue de la Grange Batelière, Paris:*

		£	s.	d.
1881.	May. Beurnonville Sale:			
	LE CHANTEUR DE PSALMES. 8,150 francs	326	0	0
	FEMME À LA COLLERETTE. 18,000 francs	720	0	0
	L'ENFANT À LA BULLE DE SAVOY. 3,050 francs	125	0	0
	LA MARCHANDE DE POISSONS. 6,400 francs	256	0	0
	LE JOYEUX BUVEUR. 3,600 francs	145	0	0
	LE PETIT PÊCHEUR. 1,120 francs	44	17	6
	LE CHANTEUR. 1,200 francs	48	0	0
	PORTRAIT D'UN JEUNE HOMME. 1,500 francs	52	0	0
1882.	PORTRAIT D'UNE FEMME. 7,800 francs	312	0	0
1885.	April. PORTRAIT D'UN HOMME. 14,010 francs	560	8	4
	JEUNE GARÇON AVEC CHEVEUX BLANCS. 2,003 francs	80	2	6

		£	s.	d.
1889.	Collection Sellar:			
	PORTRAIT D'UN HOMME. 710 francs	28	8	4
	LE JOYEUX MULATRE. 5,000 francs	200	0	0
1889.	Collection Secretan:			
	PORTRAIT DE PIETER VAN DE BROECKE D'ANVERS, Fondateur de Batavia. 110,500 francs . . .	4420	0	0
	PORTRAIT DE SCRIVERIUS (Schrijver). 41,500 francs	1660	0	0
	PORTRAIT DE LA FEMME DE SCRIVERIUS. 41,500 francs	1660	0	0
	FAMILLE HOLLANDAISE. 30,500 francs . . .	1220	0	0
1890.	Collection Rothan:			
	†LA FEMME AU GANT. 38,000 francs	1520	0	0
	L'HOMME AU MANTEAU GRIS. 6,500 francs . .	260	0	0
	LES BUVEURS. 5,100 francs	204	0	0
1891.	CONVERSATION GALANTE. 2,500 francs	100	0	0
1895.	LES BUVEURS. 13,500 francs	540	0	0
1895.	April. LES BUVEURS	160	0	0
1897.	March. LE JEUNE SIEUR	120	0	0

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The references in this index apply solely to the Bibliography and text, and do not include the various appendices at the end of the book. The various galleries, owners of pictures, and the pictures themselves enumerated in those appendices are therefore not referred to in the index unless they are also mentioned in a special manner in the text.

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